

Leaves.

J. N.

“ Still hope ! still act ! Be sure that life,
The source and strength of every good,
Wastes down in feeling's sickly strife,
And dies in dreaming's sickly mood.”

JOHN STERLING.

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PREFACE.

THE following pages not being published, it is hoped that no one will feel offended at their being printed. Too many of the poems, the writer fears, will be found to belong to the "era of adjectives"—he trusts that for him the said era has now closed.

The Translations claim the merit of being just and literal; the Translator is fain to believe that they will not be found in ~~any~~^{every} instance defective in music.

J. N.



BID me not check my accents broken,
Because, ere this, some bard has spoken
 All I dream, in deathless lays.
You do not murmur that I live,
Although the world has all I give,—
 The inheritance of ancient days.

I do not deem the feeblest striving
Falls fruitless, and our weak contriving
 Has some new purpose, yet unknown.
No task is vain,—his idle song
May save the singer's heart from wrong,
 Although it please himself alone.

There are as many varied ranges
In the soul's cadence, as the changes
 That in life's great organ ring.
When ye can say, how sun and shade
Shall touch the heart, or sea or glade,
 Then ye may tell it how to sing.

Some, from mountain-shrouded valleys,
Bring echoes home—in crowded alleys,
Others send tuneful notes afar.
Some warble to their lady love,
And sterner souls the nations move,
With the first clarion of war.

Some worship, in a choral psalter ;
Many there be who faintly falter
Murmur'd praises,—few display
A mightier force and larger wing,
To set the wide world wondering,
With music, on its golden way.

I thank them all, and in all weather,
On beaten paths, o'er hilly heather,
I cheer me, on my wandering way,
With some delicious fragment old,
From the first poet's heart outroll'd,
On some primeval morn of May.

Still here and there, like faint pearls gleaming,
Strange fancies set my spirit dreaming ;
And I seem the least alone,
When, 'mid the discords that surround,
I mix, with more melodious sound,
Some lowly chanting of my own.

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The Power of Song.

(L. SCHNABEL.)

SEIZED by the whirl of life's impetuous river,
The bard would leave the realms where beauty reigns :
Song gently calls, and wins him with sweet strains,
And all fair flowers yet bloom for him for ever.

A thousand forms approach in mocking splendour,
His inner life alluring to beguile :
Song murmurs on in earnest tones the while,
And nought can cool his bosom's glowing tender.

The day is darken'd by black clouds entwining ;
The heavens are dull, and no fair star is shining ;
Sorrow storms on, and chilling cares surround him.

Song hovers upward with a joy serene,
Circles his wounded breast in smiling mien,
And, while he doubts, in soothing arms has wound him.

Veneta.

(FROM MÜLLER.)

FROM the sea's deep, deep foundations welling,
Evening bells are ringing faint and slow ;
To us, ever wondrous tidings telling
Of an ancient wonder town below.

'Neath the lap of waters, sunken, glowing,
Still its towers a steadfast station keep ;
Golden spangles are the turrets throwing,
Shining up into the mirror deep.

And the sailor—who the magic gleaming,
Once beholds in placid evening red,
Round the same spot sails for ever, dreaming,
Though the rocks around are frowning dread.

From the heart's deep, deep foundations welling,
Hear I bells yet sounding faint and slow ;
Ah ! they twinkle, wondrous tidings telling,
Of the Love it loved once long ago.

J /

For a beauteous world is there yet glowing,
And *its* towers a steadfast station keep ;
Oft my dreams, as heavenly spangles, throwing,
In the mirror of my memory's deep.

Ah, then would I seek the depths' enthralling,
Merge my soul in the reflection fair ;
And it seems as if the angel's calling,
Lured me to the ancient city there.

The Loreley.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE.)

'Tis strange and all confusing,
I dream so sad and slow !
I cannot keep from musing
On a tale of long ago.

The air is cool, and the twilight
Is sparkling on the hill ;
Beneath the evening sky-light,
The Rhine is flowing still.

A beauteous maiden is beaming
Up yonder wondrous fair ;
Her golden raiment gleaming,
She combs her golden hair.

She combs with a comb all golden,
The while she sings a song ;
A wondrous music olden,
That draws the soul along.

It lures with a mystic charming,
The sailor in tiny skiff;
He looks not on rocks alarming,
He looks, above, on the cliff.

I fear that the waves will environ,
At last, both sailor and boat—
And that, with the song of the Syren
The Loreley has wrought.

Song of Mignon.

FROM GOETHE.

Know'st thou the land where the citrons are glowing ;
In dark nest of leaves the gold oranges lie ;
Soft wreaths of the Zephyr through blue skies are blowing ;
The myrtle blooms still, and the laurel grows high ?
Know'st thou it well ? then, O thither with thee,
O thither might I, my beloved one, flee !

Know'st thou the house with its tall colonnade ?—
The hall gleams with splendour—the chamber shines fair ;
Marble statues stand nobly, and gaze on me there.
Why have they thy fortune, thou poor child, betray'd ?
Know'st thou it well ? then with thee, O with thee,
Might I, my protector, rejoicingly flee !

Know'st thou the hill, with its clouds overarching,
Where the mule, amid mists, o'er the mountain is marching ;
In caverns the old brood of dragons is dwelling ;
Down dashes the crag with the flood o'er it swelling ?
Know'st thou it well ?—there our way lieth free ;
O thither, my father, O lead me with thee.

Hesperia.

"Hæc sunt Saturnia Regna."

I BREATHE the air upon the ocean crags,
I hear the breakers shake the ocean caves,
And catch the echoes, ringing far below—
The rise and fall of many sounds, that swell
The grand old choral music of the sea.
O glorious and great, the endless waves!
The plain is boundless, where they gambol free!
Kindled with flash of summer light, or bent
'Neath the thick lightning, and the arrowy rain,—
All o'er the world, it is the self-same sea;
And aye it brings a joyance and delight,
A freshness and a glory all its own:—
Mark, the long surf is rolling into lines,
And breaking into spangles on the shore;
The wild sea gulls, carousing with the foam,
Dance like the distant spray; the purple west
Gleams on the golden sand; but yonder, looms
A fringed veil that, drifting o'er the deep,
Makes dull the eastern headland, while along
The surface of the wrinkled waters, wan,
There slowly creeps the brooding calm of eve.

'Tis the hush'd twilight—See! the shadows cling
Closer around us, with the breeze of night,

That lulls to sleep awhile, the weary world.
The light diffusive, roll'd along the hill,
Fades, with the radiance on the forest fringe;
The purple sinks into serener blue;
While, from the ridge, the first lone star ascends,
And glowing islets of the sea and sky
Melt one by one in yonder ocean calm.
Slow as they fade, a mist-like vapour spreads
To quench the lustre of the waning day:
A black cloud resting on the turrets old,
With the pale moonlight struggling round the rim,
Hovers, bewitching, o'er the battlements:
I linger, listening to a mournful tale,
By murmuring billows told, in ceaseless tune,
A mournful music, but it brings repose,
And sings the Syren song of rest forever,
In some Elysian shore, 'neath other stars,
Whence the waves wander with their messages,
From golden islets glittering far away.
I sit beneath the towers of ancient time,
And from the grave, low whisper'd voices come,
Long-vanish'd voices of the ever dear.
Tones half-forgotten rise, and once again
The memories of the past, among the tombs,
Spring up, as flow'rets of a former year,
And bloom, in smiling sadness, golden girt.
Thus, by the margent of the voiceful main,
When all the glancing of the day is done,
And twilight glimmers through the rustling woods,
Our thoughts, all mellow'd as Autumnal leaves,
Come on the wings of sunset breezes borne.
So, in a musing mood, there falls on me
The murmur of a melancholy joy;
A harbinger of higher harmony;

For soon a wind, across the silvery waves,
Speeds from the fields of immortality ;
Breathing low music from serener spheres,
Far floating softly o'er the valley lands ;
A most celestial music—for it brings
Fair tidings down from those eternal shores ;
Time disappears, the shadows roll away ;
I gaze upon the starry eyes of old ;
I feel once more the touch of tender hands,
And yearn to follow a remember'd voice,
Till, pale and wan, beyond the rolling clouds,
I see the angel that has lured me on :
And, 'mid the many radiant forms that gleam
Through the rich gloaming of those early years,
That light transcendant shines above them all.
Thrill'd by its splendour thus on THEE I call !

Ah ! many and many a time, in stranger lands,
Through toil and trouble as I pace along,
A witching music, from the higher spheres
Where thou art thronèd, summoning, descends :
It leads me home among the sacred tombs,
From earth and care, and breaks upon my soul,
In waves of joy ;—it comes upon me now,
With an o'erwhelming tide of melody :
And, through the twilight vistas, thrilling low,
Swells like the anthem down the moonlit aisle.
It is thy voice thus flowing from the stars,
In strains more sweet than ever angel sang ;
Thy star that shines so bright above them all !
I would throw off the weight of weary life,
And steal one glimpse of those primeval days,
O'er the dark ocean of the weltering years ;
Recall the precious pictures of the past,

And find the centre of them all in thee.
Again I wander o'er the pastures green,
The pastures green, the quiet waters by,
And tread the meadows, where the gentle dove
Coo'd o'er the wild flowers, when I went with thee !
The deep-eyed violet and daisy, bloom
No longer for those vanish'd hands of thine,
Nor wood-notes warble, nor cool waters flow,
And yet again I wander there with thee !
I dream of days when I had purer dreams,
Because my heart was purer, and might glance
Deep into realms it dare not now divine.
Then friends were true, and love was over all ;
Nor venom'd hate, nor listlessness, nor care,
Had any place in all the pearly land.
The fond remembrance of those guileless hours
Awakens softly, at the thought of thee.
O happy days of childhood come again !
As summer sunshine, bright and clear, they shine.
E'en now I see the dewy valleys lie,
Girt by the purple fringes of the grove,
Wherein, at eve, I wander'd late with thee.
Then the great sunset shew'd the gates of Heaven :
The stars were clearer, in a deeper sky ;
In softer murmurs, every streamlet ran ;
A bunch of budding roses, beautiful,
Gave forth a sweeter fragrance, then, ah then !
When dark Temptation fled, before a prayer,
That rose to God, when murmur'd by thy knee :
O let those times return ! may clouds disperse,
Before the growing brightness of those eyes,
As mists before the dawning of the day.
O let my future be that past revived !
I gaze upon thy radiance, till the light

Brings darkness on my mortal eyesight dim :
Still groping onward, through sweet showers of tears,
I follow, where I hear the vanish'd voice ;
From all the stormy gulfs of tossing time,
O lead me safely to the silent sea !
O lead me from the world,—I come to thee !—
—Thus do I meditate in evening hours :
Deep in the visions of a child reborn,
I dream and dream until the damp dews fall.

The fairy dreams are fled : I am alone,
Cold as the hearth, when all its fire is out,
And the white morn shines down on embers dull.
The sand has run allotted for my joy.
I cannot e'en conceive the fond delights
That circled round me, for the fleeting train
Has ta'en high flight, on earth-disdaining wings,
With all the glad memorial melodies,
And left me sunken, without smiles or tears.
The inspiration of diviner things
Seeks back the shore eternal, whence it came.
I catch at shadows, in a mocking void,
And each bright form eludes my eager grasp ;
My hand lies powerless, as a wither'd leaf
Whose tracery the careless breezes rend ;
My heart, with every pulse at ebb, is chill,
Laid bare to all the sternness of the world.
I look abroad for light to guide me on,
But all the lustre of the deep-eyed stars
Is quench'd, in drizzly mantles of the rain.
I see the rayless darkness of the night
Stretch without bound, where'er the straining eye,
Lost in the blackness, for a beacon turns.
Thus gloom comes treading in the steps of joy,

As, in the restless shifting of the shades
That chase each other, on the murky sky,
The dreariest oft is close upon the sun.
Grief follows gladness, with a warning mien ;
The angels' Birth and Death together wend,
To hail the huts of mortals : solitude,
From the gay banquet, calls us home, with awe ;
The thunder peals the louder, when the rays
Of summer heat have mellow'd long the land.
And everywhere is darkness darker seen
When bordering brilliancy,—more chill appears
The iron present, after golden dreams,
Dim Age more wrinkled, by the side of youth.
As they, whose eyes are blinded by the sun,
Must gaze on blackness, visible around,
We come, all kindled by our thoughts of light,
And the harsh contrast of reality
Checks the bright spirit, as an icy wind
Freezes the flash of many a heaven-born fount,
That leaps in summer light,—we dream of flowers,
And meet the snow-drift on the moorland wild,
Or smoking furnace fires in city dim.

They tell us Life's a battle—and, to men
Of warrior mould, there may be music set
Deep in the clash of armour ; but for me,
Of no strong sinews to assail the foe,
There is a shrinking from so fierce a field.
I trust there may be quiet dwellings yet,
As once of yore, beyond the purple hills.
O Rest, thou haven for our weary souls,
After long toiling may I come to thee !
O name, so sweet in sound, beloved by men,
Repose, to mortals and immortals dear !

The blessed goal, toward which our wand'rings wend,
With deeper longing, after stormy days ;
Thus is the calm lake lovely, from the height,
A still blue eyelet of the gentle land :
How sweet the breeze, when, after dust and sound,
Night waves the discord of the day aside :
The rough week's labour is divinely closed,
By blissful quiet, in the day of Rest :
Fair is the call of silver Sabbath bells ;
And fair it is, on waning afternoons,
When the long shadows of the Summer fall,
To rest, at even, in the wasteful woods,
Near the rich music of a pebbly stream,
With blue bells ringing on the sunny braes,
Low listening to the hum of laden bees,
Rejoicing in their honey harvest-home ;
While o'er the beach, beyond the dewy dell,
We mark old ocean shining through the leaves,
And hear the lisp of the tell-tale waves,
The murmurous fulness of the still, deep sea.

O how I long for peace ! and evermore
Continual contest rages, and the strife
Of earth, and air, and man, and woman, breaks
Into the stillness where I long to be.
What can I dare in this unresting land,
Wherein no silence may a day endure ?
Transition rules us with tyrannic sway ;
Like dreams the generations come and go ;
Each passes peeling down the grooves of time,
As whistling arrows hurl'd beyond our ken,
When white air closes on their trackless way.
And in this motion nothing fair abides ;
The ruthless beating of the world's wild wind

No favour'd tree can stand : a quiet home,
 Set in the solitude of inland hills,
 Not long endures alone,—but soon the walls
 Of rude intrusion rise and hem the sky :
 Where arbour'd linnets chimed, in love-lorn lays,
 The glad thrush twitter'd, in the rustling leaves,
 And soaring larks' exultant carol drown'd
 The murmuring footfall of a thousand rills,
 There booms the jarring bustle of the 'Change,—
 Confusion in the crowded mart of Life.
 The axe has fallen upon the tufted pines,
 And laid their waving low,—the dusky roads
 Run through the green-wood glade and bosky dell ;
 Man plants the giant stalk amid the trees ;
 The rush of rollers and the whirr of wheels,
 With hammers clanging on the anvil, clash,
 Where slopes were fringed with fox-glove and the fern.

O how unlike the tune of ancient time,
 When men were more majestic, and the gods
 Held converse with the heroes, on the hills,
 And fair nymphs follow'd beauty, o'er the plain,
 To some still nook, in the Autumnal groves.—
 Then might the poet live and die alone,
 Nay, not alone!—but in the pathless woods,
 By lake and river, haunted by delight.
 But now the days are dull, the sword of flame
 Still drives us onward, from the garden gates ;
 At each new change a glory leaves the earth :
 Oppression looms in all the dismal air :
 The discord of uneasy sounds disturbs
 The even course that I would calmly ~~read~~ ^{read}.
 What dare I do in this unresting age!
 With all things withering, in a wan decay ;

When visions vanish early,—suns descend,
Ere scarce their rising has adorn'd the vale,—
The dreary vale where gloomy shadows sleep?
Say, what am I! and all the stormy thoughts,
That keep revolving round the tiny cares
Of one small speck in this unfathom'd sea?
Oft as I ask, a scornful voice replies,
With a keen laugh that shrivels all my hope;—
“Canst move this earth, or will her course for thee,
And all thy prayers, be slacken'd for an hour?
What matters it so much what way is thine!
Fate rules supremely, and her iron will
Bends not for mortals,—boastful emmet, learn,
Whether thou liv'st or diest, larger souls
Have died before, and still the world moved on
Without a tremble on its even way”—
I seem a waif upon the weary wave;
A sickly infant, in a fever'd dream;
In this dim land of tumult tumbling down,
Whose discord sets my music all ajar,
In this rough age, I find not any rest;
What may I do but dream on golden dawn!
And though the trance be fleeting, oft recall
The robes of splendour all the world put on,
Seen in the light of those serener eyes?

Thus, in a musing mood, I linger'd long;
I gazed into the cycles of the morn,
And, o'er the foam, where Hesper leads the stars,
I thought of bright redeeming years to come—
Melodious fancies—yet the tuneful strain
Was touch'd with tears, and cross'd by vain regret;
I could not venture toward a merrier theme;
Boon sleep forsaking in the shades of night,
I found my only solace in a song.

How seldom, from serener skies,
In these dull days of doubt and fear,
Do radiant angels greet our eyes!

How soon they disappear!

The earth is old, and weary grown,
Its harp unstrung, its music o'er,
Save winds and waters making moan,
Along the silent shore.

Rude feet have trodden fairest flowers;
Thick smoke obscures the kindest rays;
We seek, forlorn in festal hours,
The homes of earlier days.

The happy groves, in distance, shine,
The misty sunlight round them roll'd;
Remembrance of the dawn divine
Floats from the fields of old.

The breeze, from yonder pastures blown,
Around the sleeping poet streams,
And brings enchantment, thither flown,
To his immortal dreams.

He sits upon a cliff and sings,
And sends his music o'er the sea,
'Tis from the princely past he brings
His mystic melody.

O sing to us of ancient time!
And let the noisy discord die—
The suns, in purple-shaded clime,
The Eden earth and sky.

The splendours of Aurora then
Lit up brave deeds, old legends tell,—
Shone on a race of valiant men,
 Who lived and wrestled well.

The heavens bent down, with milder eye,
On Argive height, and Tyrian dome,
The clash of arms rang, Victory !
 Beneath the walls of Rome.

Peneian fountains, to the sea,
Bore tidings of the battles won,
Where Hellas bade the world be free,
 As brighter reigns begun.

Whene'er a high-soul'd chief display'd
His might of arm, and soaring wing,
The nations shouted, as they made
 A loyal welcoming.

But now the fair horizon fades,
Life in a downcast shadow dies,
And, over all the pleasant glades
 A desolation lies.

Now men are cast in meaner mould,
And ever bent on meaner things ;
When right and wrong are bought and sold,
 Tame Freedom folds her wings.

They prate of Justice, willing slaves,
While tyrants rule from main to main :
They dance above the hallow'd graves
 Of heroes, fallen in vain !

Thus, kingless all, they drift along
Through peace and war,—nor heed nor know
Those jostlers, in the aimless throng,
E'en how the waters flow.

A purer faith and nobler deed
Men boast, but are their hearts more true
Than when they held the simpler creed
That earlier ages knew?

Still stooping to the sordid ground,
They fix on earth a soulless stare;
Till thunder shakes the peaks around,
I' the lightning's lurid glare.

The poet no repose can find
In this dull strife, and little rage;
In memory's secret haunts enshrined,
He seeks the golden age.

He lingers o'er a hidden love
Forgotten once—revived again,
Like gem that some tide drifts above
From caverns of the main.

The spell of love's remember'd sway
Brings back the faces of the dead,
And phantom friends—a long array—
Leave the dark river's bed.

It glances on the ruin'd walls,
Beams, breaking o'er the lonely lea,
And throws a flash on waterfalls,
Down dancing to the sea.

When beats the pulse of wild desire,
Or passing storms shake timid peace,
Thick passion thrills with fitful fire,
 This calms and tumults cease.

We live within an age of toil,
And love to look on fairer strands,
Or strain, beyond the barren soil,
 Toward future faery lands.

O sweet it were to find an endless rest,
In some dim island where the surges swell!
Some land unknown, by sunny waves caress'd,
 With love alone to dwell!

Yet say, ye winds and waters, day and night,
Where lies that unknown isle so fresh and fair?
Soft Music lure me to the land of light,
 Or, Echo, tell me where!

Thus the vague winding of my listless strain
Came to a rounded pause,—I marvelling
How oft the tone of our revolving thoughts
Turns to a higher purpose than we know.
For, simply seeking solace and relief
From melancholy dreams, I fell at length
To question eagerly from whence they sprung.
And found solution, full of strange result,—
Herald of wider wonder—for it seem'd,
After long musing, that our mortal minds,
Unsatisfied with every present gift,
Keep ever turning toward another time,
In past or future, and a fairer shore.
And yet we ne'er can name the golden age,

Or hold it lurking in our inmost thoughts,
Save as an epoch in the misty years,
All undefined and undefinable.
And, though a myriad keels have plough'd all seas,
Yet never mariner has touch'd the strand
We long to visit in the deep unknown.
What island then is this we fain would reach,
That flees before us, as the rainbow shuns
The child who chases, with high hope to find
Bright treasure hid beneath th' alluring arch,
And follows over heath and dell in vain
A meteor of his own imagining?
Echo replied, our own imagining.—
And then I ponder'd on the "good old times,"
And wondering saw them vanish from my gaze
Back in the days primeval, as the line
O'er yon horizon rim, we ne'er attain.
Still tempted by the gleam of distant pearls,
I found them melting, as I deeper dived;
And in my inquest of the ancient realms,
No rock replied—" 'tis here the golden age,"
But all re-echoed, "yonder," holding forth
A hand that pointed to Hesperian shores,
Westward and westward, as the ocean roll'd.
I wander'd back to each old nation's prime,
And found them strangely restless; with their time
And gifts celestial, all unsatisfied.
The noonday glare of th' oriental sun,
Was scarce enough to warm the dusky Ind;
Assyrian monarchs could not rest within
The marble portals of their palaces;
Nor did Sesostriis deem the haze of light,
And odorous incense, ever rolling round
The sombre halls of his majestic Nile,

Full climax of the splendours of the world.
Each had a spot unknown, diviner still,
In secret cavern, or beneath the seas,
Or hidden by the peaks of endless hills,
In Abyssinian mount or home conceal'd
Deep in the stillness of a hollow vale,—
Some unsuspected Eden far away.
And each believed, at last, a day would dawn—
Their mystic deity's ungiven gift—
To crown the cycle of the rolling years.

Above Ionian valleys do we deem
There hung a lustrous fulness evermore,
Shaming the flicker of our hazy light.
Down the Arcadian hills the fountains fell,
Lit by the laughter of the Naiades;
Fair was the field of Enna—Daphne's spring,
And the Castalian sources ever young,
Flash'd forth in freshness of eternal morn.
The dawn rose ruddier from the mountain ridge,
And led the glowing hours ;—maternal Heaven
Bent over earth, as o'er a new-born child
With clearer starry eyes; dew-spangled earth,
All radiant, lifted up its face and smiled.
The streams and meadows, and the forests dim,
Round dark Dodona or the Delphian steep,
Chaunted the thrilling oracles of Jove.
Olympus wore her coronet of gods,
That shed a halo on the craggy heights.
Then the nymphs gamboll'd, and the Cyclades
Seem'd freshly gather'd from celestial shores.
Each foot of Grecian ground was consecrate,
By the last track of some sky-cleaving god.
Her vales and cities, fill'd with glorious deeds,

Rung as the arches with the organ swell.
Yet did it ne'er content the Greek to see
His own Ægean, sparkling 'neath the sun ;
Or wander in the vale of Tempe, spann'd
By silver clouds, above the crested cliff ;
Or watch the waves from Sunium's marbled steep :
But he must search for the Hesperian isles,
Across the twilight, o'er a sunken sea,
Girt by the murmur of the ocean stream,
And fann'd by breezes, bringing soft repose,
Where Rhadamanthus reign'd, with just decree,
O'er Peleus, Hector, Morning's Æthiop son,
And great Pelides, chief among them all.
Storm-toss'd Ulysses left the smiling bays
Of craggy Ithaca, and bent his oars
Beyond the tempest, toward the happy land.
Though well-loved Syren voices sung of home,
O'er rugged rifts, and many a seething sea,
He bore right boldly, for he saw afar
The starry vision of the blessed isles,
Where dwelt the heroes, and the golden age
Once more serenely, as in older time,
Shed peaceful glory on Elysian plains.

Ah, time unknown, but somewhere long ago !
Dim dream of every age, in every land,
Which each new cycle paints in alter'd hues ;
What art thou but a meteor of the mind,
An everlasting theme for poets' song ;
Too changeful for a bright reality ?
Yet each old nation had its tale of thee,
A something past or future, far removed,
Calmer and fairer, than the ways of men,
In any clime, allow'd their day to be.

'Twas thus the lyrist bade the Romans leave
 The mellow fruits of sunny Italy,
 To seek a safer haven, and a rest,
 Where the kind gods had set a sleeping home
 To wait for an awakening of their prowess.
 A home divinely favoured—later sang
 The Mantuan, "Now Saturnian times return."
 And yet they came not, but the iron age
 O'erwhelm'd the world; nor need we strive to find
 One clime embalm'd, amid the slow decay,
 And burning of the wither'd classic realms,
 That touch'd the tips of Atlas and the snows
 Of icy Hæmus with a lurid fire.
 Nor, when from out their embers, Phoenix-wing'd,
 New lands and races sprang to fresher life,
 Was the first monarch, on a Gothic throne,
 Content to marshal his triumphant hosts,
 Without a thought of some diviner day,
 In dark Hercynian forests, when the gods—
 Great Thor and Odin—fought in foremost ranks.
 E'en in the sunnier ages of Romance,
 The mail-clad knights of kingly chivalry,
 In tent and tourney, still beheld afar
 The stately image of a bolder field,
 While, through the green woods, glimmer'd "Faerie
 Why discontented do we still return [lande."
 To beaten paths, or with reverted eyes
 Walk backward on our own?—as it has been,
 'Tis like to be,—'neath good king Alfred's sway,
 Round mighty Arthur, shone those golden years.
 In milder reigns our modern minstrels sing
 "The spacious times of great Elizabeth."

Thus, from false dreams, we sift eternal truth,

Which ever lies, behind the phantoms, calm
As are the deep foundations of the sea,
Or stars, beyond the frenzied elements,
Patient and changeless as they smiled on me ;
For, when again I gazed into the night,
Imperial darkness was not all alone.
The rain no longer lash'd about the clouds,
And rugged rifts disclosed the vault serene.
Thus sang I musing, in a better mood,
On this strange search for some diviner age.

'Tis we who give a glory to the day,
And call one clime more favour'd than the rest ;
Our dreams, reflected, glitter far away,
Beyond the mountain crest.

The evening air that fans the fever'd brow,
Comes fairer, from the sunset ridges borne ;
The shepherd bells, to us, ring sweet and low,
From the bright slopes of morn.

A distant sail is winsome,—fairer far
The ship seen sliding o'er the rippling sea,
Than safely lodged, within the harbour bar,
The anchor on the lea.

The clouds o'erhead come trailing dark and slow,
And hill and vale, in chill embrace, enfold ;
On yon horizon, floating light, they glow
In purple sheen and gold.

We fondly gaze where'er th' invading grave
Has left its track, and ruin'd turrets thrill ;
We trace, in cities sunk beneath the wave,
Diviner aspect still.

In time or place, remoteness ever lends
A haze of splendour, and a magic spell
Rests on the homes of childhood, and the friends
That in our memory dwell.

Yet were the hours not all unruffled then,
Nor were the ages perfect long ago ;
The lands that lie beyond our mortal ken,
Have mingled joy and woe.

They tell us that the southern stars are bright,
And deep their glance upon the antique spires,
Yet, from the moorland, in the soundless night,
I watch the gleaming fires !

Along the morning and the evening ridge
Glitters a ringlet of alluring light,
The noon is, as the present, but a bridge ;
Yet 'tis thereon we fight !

Each man and nation has essay'd to seek
A golden age, or an Hesperian clime,
But neither Jew, nor Gentile, Goth, nor Greek,
Have found the land or time.

Still as I ended came a Voice that rang,
Keen questioning ; among the legends old
Are there no lingering traces of a Past
Transcendant o'er the future, nor a tale
To which all others lead the searching eye ;
A truth made brighter by those mythic clouds :—
For o'er the maze of varied mortal dreams
One holds pre-eminence, and crowns them all,
Full of a deeper awe ;—as is the Sun

One dazzling centre, whence a thousand lines,
Through wide creation, wing meandering way;
Do our vain visions, in this central light,
Hold their high source? Around remotest lands,
Hence does the white Truth shed its colour'd rays?
Or is this, too, the phantom of a day,
A dream of childhood,—with the rest to fade,
Howe'er embalm'd, in lapse of rolling years?

There lies a land where Desolation reigns,
Supreme as on the wilds of endless snow;
And barren solitude has set her throne,
On every crag above the cataracts,
That break the stillness of the hollow vale,
Ungreen'd and tenantless her ruins rest;
By the long sea-shore, and the desert lake;
Around the brink of all the hallow'd streams,
Her temples, palaces, and tombs decay.
The adder glides across the couch of kings,
And owlets flutter round the crumbling wall.
Her dreams are ever of the Past—for here
Dwelt the proud race that named itself alone
The chosen people,—when peculiar awe
Weigh'd on their glens, and loom'd from out the shade,
O'er the dread altar of the Cherubim.

'Twas they who told how, in the dawn of time,
From glowing earth, the happy garden grew.
There dwelt that primal pair, who lived in light,
Perfect and peaceful, as the peers of Heaven.
Through fragrant bowers, by waving branches closed,
'Mid fruits and flow'rets, on the dewy mead,
Ring'd by delights, they roam'd—the blissful twain—
Or hand in hand, or with their angel guests;

Unsorrowing and sinless,—well content
 To live,—as roses fann'd by melody—
 A golden cycle of serene repose.
 Yet, from the fairest fountain of delight,
 They tell us truly, something bitter springs :
 The canker, in the core of summer rose,
 Turns the warm leaves to worms, and Death greets Life,
 Hard by the gates of every Paradise.
 'Twas thus the presence of the Tempter came,
 Like a dark smoke, to this ethereal air,
 And brought desire to search forbidden things :—
 A knowledge yet unknown of Life and Love.—
 Earth's first created strove with Fate, and fell !
 Unhappy longing to be like the gods !
 Shame, the dark shadow of their guilt, o'erwhelm'd
 Their trustful calm, as all creation cower'd ;
 The soil grew bare, and muttering thunder-clouds
 Sent the first lurid flash above the hills.
 While the dread sword of flame, from fiery heaven,
 Beyond the portals of the encircling walls,
 Drove the pale mortals to a stormy world.

Such is the tale of Eden !—long ago,
 Divinely told, and as divinely sung
 By one whose singing shall be never mute.
 A theme so consecrate, that none may strive
 To touch again the lines immortal ever ;
 Yet, as each age a newer anthem sings,
 And, from the chorus of the winds and ~~winds~~ *waves*,
 Draws other meanings,—in the legends old
 Each generation finds a fitting song,
 And tunes the key-notes to its own endeavour,
 We too may read, with alter'd eyes, the tale
 “Of man's first disobedience,” and may ask,

Is this the fount of all Elysian dreams,
Itself unmarr'd by mythic poesy?

How much is modell'd on the constant type
Of change, that passes through our human life !
Three epochs mark it ; as in trees and flowers,
In birds and insects, every living thing,—
Bright birth, strong manhood, and a calm decay
Mark the great stages of transition here.
Resemblance strange, with other spheres entwined,
With motions of the river and the cloud,
The process of the sun and all the stars ;
In mighty march of nations plainest seen.
From bounding youth, they grow to manly power,
Their high task finish'd, yield to younger lands.
May we not deem the like of all mankind,
Advancing from its youth, by winding way,
Toward larger strength and wider wisdom borne,
At length to sink, perchance, in larger realms ?
The fullest being only never dies.
As we look back upon our childhood dim,
All robed in purple mantles, like the morn,
Faint with the fuller sunlight, we discern
In distant years, a beauty scarce their own :
Thus the romantic records of the race
Have thrown a glory round primeval times.

With this interpretation—this alone,
In these late days, our modern ears can learn
The tale of Eden, as an eastern dream
Of that same oft-reviving golden age,
That is, in every land, the memory
Of the first hours when all the earth was young.
'Tis an old story, but eternal still ;

Each morn an infant hails the shining shores
Of life's wide ocean, Adam lives anew;
The guileless springtide, then temptation's dawn,
The fruit forbidden, and the sudden fall
Of innocence, are acted o'er again
In each new little life; and far o'er all,
As o'er the lily and the youngest star,
The great Creator's hand is hovering.
We dream, in infancy, of calmer hours
Than lie before us in the brightest day,
And *then* we walk in Eden—'neath the smile
Of Earth and Heaven,—how very near they seem,
When tiny fingers long to touch the stars,
And dread Jehovah's only name is Love!
With what a chilling blast we feel dispell'd
Our fairy visions, when we first discern
That these are vain; new revelations tell
That the blue sky is all beyond our reach,
And through the gates of sunset now no more,
May perfect spirits find serene abodes:
Thus bears *the tree of knowledge* bitter fruit.
The *Reason* in mankind is Psyche's torch,
That, with far-piercing radiance, lightens up
The varied shapes of good and ill that lurk,
As lions or as angels, in the road,—
The rugged road on which the manchild wends.
The slave of Passion, in the glow of youth,
And sway'd by images, he scarce perceives
How wider realms supernal rest above;
Till higher laws, descending thence, command
A stern revolt from Impulse and Desire,
And Life wakes self to hearken Duty's call.
Truth hastes to tear the mask from many a vaunt
Of gilded vanity,—as full daylight

Shews the bright gauds on which dim tapers shone
Not half so gorgeous : thus Reality
Breaks our old idols ere the gods arrive !
Then comes Reflection, with its bitter train
Of empty longings, and a vain regret
For placid Paradise and childlike days,
Beyond the o'erarching shadows of the tomb ;
While doubts and questions, meeting mysteries
Which the weak questioner can never know,
Assail, with searching for witholden things ;
A wayward wandering,—then a blind Distrust,
Succeeding Confidence ; till Hope, and Love,
And Patience follow, with a soothing balm.
Then, seeing more beyond, man finds himself
Not less in power, but far and far removed,
In the discordant turmoil of his dream,
From the serene gods unapproachable.
As friends departed seem transfigured clear,
Exalted o'er us, in the light that blinds
Our dusky vision ; and, in purer ray,
Their spirits shining from serener strands,
Have scarce communion with our darker souls,
In such familiar aspect as of yore ;—
We glance upon a beauty so divine,
Their sweet smile dazzles, as in Dante's dream,
While we are trembling at the encircling fires,
That must refine us ere we clasp their hand ;—
So, in the progress of our thoughts of Him,
The circling centre of Almighty power ;
As each new attribute, though dimly, dawns
On our rapt gaze, we tremble more and more
And feel our weakness, as we hear and see
Deep beyond deep in His immensity.
The more we learn of yonder simple star,

The more unfit we seem to talk with it,
 So distant in its glory; this we feel
 In all God's perfect works; as we descry,
 Through symbols, more of His omnipotence,
 Divinity ascends from mortal view,
 And leaves us wondering; till, at length, we know
 That an immeasured gulf divides afar
 Our weakness and the silent sovereignties.

'Twas thus, in Eden days of innocence—
 Thus childlike, ere the dawn of Reason's sway,
 Man walk'd all guileless, for he knew no wrong:
 Trustful and loving, as the lark that soars
 Straight to the morn, and pure as mountain-spring.
 Yet is the purity of heart that lives
 In ignorance of evil,—unassailed
 By grief and fear, the universal lot—
 Not the true goal of human destiny!
 But a slow progress, through the shifting sway
 Of Light and Darkness, so that every trial—
 Each fresh temptation, bringing knowledge new—
 Crowns with a sterner strength the victor's will,
 And yields its force, as oft the savage feels—
 They tell us yet in islands o'er the wave—
 Thrill through his soul the might of slaughter'd foes.
 Was man born sinless? yet the seeds of sin
 Were sown on fertile soil—the human heart—
 Else whence that yielding to the wily tongue,
 And fall imagined from the castled heights?
 Hence do we find the first-created full
 Of *Imperfection*—not the appointed end
 Of any work divine,—for all are made
 To tend from good to better, on to best.
The gods alone are Perfect—no new good,

No truth is wrought, but out of Strife and Change.
How could the bowers of Eden be the home,
Meant to sublime the race to higher things?
Here never might the human soul ascend,
Through a long course of immortality,
Nor the divine commandments be fulfill'd.
Far kinder than we reckon of are the fates;
And Destiny sits calm, beyond the tears
That she makes fall, from those who, weak in Faith,
Can never trust the All Inscrutable.
The fall of Adam was the rise of man
To higher contemplations, nobler spheres;
And well it was he left the leafy bowers,
And saw the drowsy portals close for aye;
Amid the shouting of the Seraphim,
And loud acclaim of all the heavenly hosts;
While the Archangel's trumpet urged him on,
To act and suffer, in an earnest world.
Then fell the scales from his awaken'd eyes,
Man felt that he was mortal, and, the more,
How he must toil, in his mortality—
The day far spent, the night so near at hand.
Rest lay behind him,—and the path before
Led to a boundless and unresting land,
Through which his *ignorance* must come to *know*
His *folly* to be *wise*, beneath the smile
Of an all-loving, changeless Deity,
Who sent him, with a blessing, not a curse,
To do his will, and to subdue the world.

Men fell not then, but their dim thoughts of God
Rose to the Empyrean, and they knew
That he was seen, in darkness, as in light,
On pathless waves, and from the looming cloud,

As in the green leaves and the soundless sky ;
But faintly seen and far above them all !
They knew the bounty of the sun and shower ;
Through what strange avenues their blessings came ;
And that a wilderness of many hills,
Better than any garden, beacon'd on
Toward further heights of being to be won.
They found their future, in the far-off fields
Wherein a long day's toil made sweet repose ;
The corn of labour was a boon to them,
Richer than feasts from the Hesperian tree.
Then, in the progress of the rolling year,
From genial Spring to Winter lined with snow,
They chaunted higher hymns, at early morn,
And bent at eve, with lowlier reverence.
In an accepted worship, then they sung
The praises of the Lord ;—his highest praise
Wrung from the earnest efforts of the day—
This was a life of truer liberty ;
For 'tis alone the worker that is free !
Toil is the only ladder to the gods ;
Through ceaseless action, slope the altar stairs,
That reach 'mid mists, unto the silent shore.

Thus they wander'd from the portals, in those dim prim-
eval days,
Toward a life of change and tumult—love and hope—and
fears and frays !

Yet, in wandering, better growing,
Than in any garden bowers :
In their toil, a lustre throwing
On those latter days of ours.

Let us read the revelation, from the oracle of man,
Truth alike for us and Adam—units of a mighty plan :

That, in motion and endeavour,
Is the only way to climb,
Toward the stars,—that, now or never,
Is the fated trial time !

Need we wander toward Hesperia,—search for islands o'er
the sea !

Was Eden not a home for Eve ? Were Rest enough for thee
and me ?

Tell us not of godheads olden,
And of fields in fairer glow !
There are other ages golden
Than the ages long ago.

Many a weary winter evening, as we gazed on charted
strands,

Thou hast sung of murmurous rivers, rippling over pearly
sands ;

With long tressèd mermaids dancing
To the music of the shore,
Shady bowers, and dark eyes glancing,
And rest for evermore.

Hence with vain Elysian marvels ! Hearken, I will sing to
thee

A nobler and a better song, that fits the chorus of the
free !

Now the chaunt of moving nations
Is the same as mine and thine,
Stars of higher aspirations,
In our souls ascending, shine.

For they tell us,—how divinely ! here is Eden for us all,
Wheresoever God hath placed us,—where our daily duties
call.

Loud the minster bells are ringing ;
Warriors brave the foe engage ;
While our noblest bards are singing,—
Singing of their mother age :

For they love it, with its turmoil, dearly as their native land :
Haste we to its van of action ; beating heart, and steady
hand.

Welcome ! are the angels calling ;
Hark the joyous tidings nigh !
'Mid the dim world's discord falling,
From the meteor-flaming sky.

Tidings of a nobler future, than the past has ever been,
E'en in the walls of Paradise, and fields of fresher green.

Let us then be eager moving,
Send the sunlight toward the gloom,
Whatsoever eyes unloving,
O'er us in yon twilight loom.

O'er the stately wall and archway the cathedral quire re-
sounds ;

And though few may touch the key-notes, in life's anthem,
work abounds ;

Lightest breeze may aid the blowing,
Of the organ in the dome :
Forth in mildest music flowing,
Breaking into golden foam.

'Tis thus, I think, the Sphinx's riddle runs,
A riddle read anew to every race,

With fresh interpretation ; this is ours :
Not the bold thought of solitary souls,
But whither tends the mind of marching men—
Unerring pilots of the age of toil.
From sunny slopes, and downy woods that wave
Rich music o'er the stillness of a dream,
The clarion calls us to the battle-field.
There is no time for dreaming, while the tread
Of Labour rushes through the throbbing streets,
In ceaseless wave, at morning, noon, and night ;
And the undaunted axe is ringing clear
In deep recesses of the forest glade.
When thought is action, and the power of man
Grows more resistless, in its headlong course ;
Old Ocean bears across her wrinkled waves
The burden of his wondrous messages ;
While the hoarse thunder of the fire-horse whirls
In dread career, along the iron way.
No days are these for musing 'mong the flowers !
No days for idling, and for random rhymes,
For barren tales that pass all profitless !
Naught is attain'd, but by the constant price
Of fiery struggle in the foaming tide.
And naught achieved, unless through stern resolve
To live and die in harness ; somehow bent
To mould the Mind, or Matter we command,
To forms more fair and useful,—other hopes
The ringing laughter of the world dispels,
The steadfast touch of chill reality.
This naught can baffle, and it must endure
Spite of all scorn,—but, oh ! how few advance,
With ever-dauntless soul, to do and dare :
Though the Heavens beckon, if the tempest lower,
We leave Life's sea, and from high balcony

Smile on the tossing of the waves below,
And talk of shipwrecks from the timid shore :
Perchance we venture when the sky is clear
To launch a bark—but our unsteady strength
Soon, faithless, ebbs, our weak sails flap, the oar
Dips listless on the surface of the deep,
As we are leaning o'er it, careless all,
Till kindly chance may drift us whence we came.
How seldom dare we speak out, loud and bold,
The truth revealed!—to act is rarer still.
All tongues may tell—but ether-mounting wings
Alone can follow—where the eagle soars.
Yet oft those tongues are traitors, and disguise,
In meaner mantles, the diviner thoughts
We dread to show in plain sincerity.
Our faith is fearful, and ashamed to wear
A dress the customs of the world deride.
Thus march we stammering through the hum of fools,
Oft bending low, and turning from the way,
Lured by the glitter of the flickering flame,
That leaps delusive in the sports of Earth,
Till the calm sunlight's pure serenity
Shines red and glaring on our blinded eyes.
'Tis *therefore* that we never cease to gaze
On halos, wavering beyond the hill,
Or a long lustre lingering behind.
We look before and after, and esteem
The past and future milder than to-day.
The light that hovers on the heights of morn,
Cast from the memories of early love,
Shines fair in distance, as the golden line
Left by the sunset, to allure us on
From peak to peak, from island unto isle,
Yet unsuspected in the unknown seas.

Seen from a far-off view, the mountain side
Lies all reposing, and the upland slopes
Invite the tender tread of faery feet ;
The grey old rocks, that peer amid the moss,
And stem the tinkling footfall of the stream,
Smile from the heathery braes, until we run
To clamber up at once the noble way :
Nor is it till the task is well begun,
We see o'er what rough crags the path ascends,
How many a toilsome step we must impress
On marsh and thicket, over weary stones,
Ere firmest foot can gain the crested crown.
Thus do the rugged rocks that rest amid
The heath-bells of the ridges where we climb
In life's steep pilgrimage—seem gently grey
From the dim distance, but a nearer view
Shows the ascent a pathway girt with fears.
“ Then, why ascend we ? ” is the craven cry
Of the faint-hearted,—“ Rather tarry long
Among the sheltering shadows of the vale,
And peacefully, in undisturb'd repose,
Enjoy our feast of life until we leave,
When grim Death calls us from the banquet halls.”
So sang old sages ; but a higher song
Is chaunted by our prophets in the choir
Of God's cathedral,—sounding forth to men
A higher duty than to feed on joys
More transient than themselves,—a higher call,
Rung from the arches of the choral sky :
Stern truth, through suffering and in sorrow shown,
Taught by the lives of heroes crown'd in thorns,
And calm-eyed martyrs with unconquer'd will.
In fate of empires, and in fall of kings,
As in the measured ringing of the steel,

On the rude anvil by the forest forge,
This revelation of the age is writ:
That life has other uses than to make
Our foolish vanity content with gain;
That Work is Worship; and that man is here,
Sent speeding from eternal depths of time,
To join in hymning her triumphal psalm;
Which winds and waves, and the bright stars proclaim,
While the dark ocean ever westward rolls.
And in this worship pain and pleasure blend,
And grief and joy unite in ministry,
To make us resolute and trustful; strong
In faith that sees where fancied knowledge fails,
And gathers lessons from the grave itself,—
Perchance the greatest teacher; solemn night
Reveals a thousand worlds, bright day but one.
How oft the darker phases of our life,
When peace deceives—announce reality!
As when a company of dancers gay,
'Mid merry music, and the glare of lights,
'Neath gilded canopies, and crystal sheen,
With silken folds, and odorous waving flowers,
Forget stern truth, in rich Arabian dreams;
Till, all aghast, they whisper, as they hear
Deep through the dance the cannons' sullen tone:
Or start when, in a castle by the sea,
The bolt that drives a skiff sheer down the deep,
While angry skies hang heavy overhead,
Sends warning sound to drown their revelry.
With such dread echoes all around our ears,
We dare not reckon life a banqueting,
From which the guests are summon'd to arise,
Their pleasure spent beside the festal board:
The crash of elements, in wrathful mood,

The mighty thunders on the heaving main,
Down the long gorges of the awful hills,
With the red lightning's flash o'er land and flood,
Have other meanings unto mortal minds :
They tell us earth is but a battle plain,
And Eden lies beneath the shade of swords.

To turn dark chaos to a blooming land,
And plough the fields made fertile, is the task
That earns an entrance through the garden gates.
List to the spheres—they move—obey their call !
March 'neath the night, in calmest confidence,
And know that conquest only wins repose.
That action is the means divine to raise
Our earth-born souls toward true serenity.
The idle sword grows rusty in its sheath :
The axle jars within the wheel unworn :
The ship, in haven stored, warps, lank and lean ;
Till yawning cracks are sealed by salt sea waves,
When the keel bounds amid the briny spray :
The torrent, dashing, from the clearest spring,
In a still pool, will stagnate ; and the air
Of heaven itself, grows sultry all unstirr'd,
Till the benignant tempest clears the sky :
When the wind falls the thick cloud hides the hill :
So, on the musing melancholy mind,
The shrouds of doubt and sorrow and despair
Descend, like dreary drifts of blinding snow.
But dare we bend with valour to our task
And wake from slumber, with a manly heart—
As when the sun and morning breeze combine—
The snow-drifts vanish and disclose anew
Fresh fields and meadows greener than of old.

The wide world moving is with motion clad,
Nor beast nor bird nor trees nor stones are still,
The planets hold on their revolving way,
The stars and firmaments still journey on,
In ceaseless march, and change succeeding change
Blends in unending circles, wheel on wheel ;—
Amid those cycles of majestic power
Ever evolving motion strange and new,
Shall man alone be still?—shall he alone,
Of God's creation so pre-eminent,
First old, when all the universe is young,
Grow weary in the whirling scheme of things?
Nay, rather rise we and advance anew
To press right onward to the van of life.
We are the lords of earth, and all things move
Around and *for* us, would we take them so :
And well employ those servants that are ours.
Say not alone the sunshine is benign ;
Will we ne'er learn the good of stormy weather ?
This, too, is change, whose full beneficence
We slowly comprehend,—yet o'er and o'er
We feel its influence and stirring power :
Though pelted by the rain and scornful hail
On the lone heath, we may be better there,
Than by the warm fire round whose radiant light
Wet darkness hovers,—for our strength awakes,
As the blood dances in our eager veins ;
Well speed the tasks that lie across our way !
And woe to foeman who would thwart us then !
The storm arouses might in wavering hearts
That sleep in sunshine, and calamities
Wring the calm soul to some wild energy ;
So that it bursts asunder bands that bind
Its free aspirings—and affrighted sloth

Withdraws its fether, that alone delays
The tramp of martial footsteps that would climb
On from an Alpine peak amid the stars
Up to the stars themselves above the world.

Oh, quiet poets of the summer time,
Who sing serenely of the joys of rest,
Long may your melodies ring calm and clear !
'Tis sweet indeed, in lazy afternoons,
By gurgling brooklets, in a fairy dell,
To sit amid a maze of gentle flowers,
That waft a fragrance through the lipping leaves,
To murmur music in a wood-nymph's ear,
And read confession in her dewy eyes.
Such rest *is* blissful Eden to the soul.
Still, 'mid thy wood-notes, watch the lark and know
That soaring upward is yet more divine !
I love to bask upon the tangled mead,
'Neath shaded sunshine,—ere the light is low,
Or wander quaintly 'mong the old oaks grim,
In some primeval forest—where I hear
Low whisper'd legends of a thousand years,
From those enormous boles, while all around,
The waving beech and silken birch so slim,
With rustling of innumerable trees,
Carol afar of the bright silvery morn.
I long to ramble, by the ocean shore,
Near ancient tombs, when dancing day is done,
And muse upon the murmur of calm waves,
Nor dream of any other melody.
Yet not for all the varied still delights
Of sun and shadow in a sleeping world,
Would I forego the rapture of the hour,
When first I stand upon the cloud-capt peak

In some primeval kingdom of the hills!
Ringed by the wet wrath of the granite walls—
The mist that with a silken rustling glides
Up the dark glen—and wreath on wreath ascends
And shifts around the steaming battlements
'Mid the wild war-cry of exulting winds.
I leap along the ridges of the morn!
And shout afar to mountain echoes wild—
The deep reverberations of the world—
I am *above* the world and all its cares.
And, glaring down upon her winding ways,
Like eagle throned upon the dawn-swept heights,
I move triumphant, on the castled crags;
Till, in the chaunt of that imperial air,
I hear the chorus never known before,
And feel inspired with wings to breast the cloud.
Behold, beneath the valleys winding far
And ocean-bounded plains stretch endlessly!
The voice of fountains in eternal fall,
The lines of glory round the giant steeps,
The purple lustre looming on the moor,
Entrance the soul, till ravish'd eye and ear
Forget all other worlds of sight and sound.

Return to earth, we cannot always climb
On the riven peaks of the cloud-cleaving hill—
There burn the loftiest beacons; yet below
We meet a thousand daily messages,
That point the way to those who wish to run
The race that lies before them,—to prepare
The pathway for the coming of the Lord.
Wait for no fairer morn, but now resolve;
Repair the temple; resting well assured
That we are walking in the golden age,

And here or nowhere is the promised land.
In silence store up wisdom for the fight ;
Thy foes will meet thee at th' appointed time—
And gather shafts and spear-heads by the way,
Find in each phase of man and nature aid
To lead thee onward ; that the least may do.
Up from the pageant of the scenic show,
In life's vast tumult, as from trees and flowers,
Spring sudden motives for a wider sail
Round the wide world ; and the impetuous way,
Mark'd by the tread of others, urges on
The next to loftier deeds,—a noble death,
The last great effort of a hero's day,
Will surely quicken the devoted lives
Of martyrs toiling in the same great cause.
Now, as of yore, a cloud of witnesses
Are hovering around us,—still we hear
A glorious voice, announcing from on high,
The day is spent, but broader day draws near ;
Be true, be ready, are the warning words,
Proclaim'd by angels, in eternal tone ;
While countless constellations roll afar
The diapason of the Universe.—
Come hither ! is the song of all the saints ;
Look on the crown thy guiding seraph holds,
Nor grope all blindly on the sordid ground !
We listen, in the silent night, and hear
Great Revelations of our destiny :
While rich low voices, clear and calm, descend,
That thrill through all our being evermore,
And, spite of discord over land and sea,
One beacon shines in fixed tranquillity.
This guides unerring, through beyond the stars ;
This cannot fade, it is the lamp of Him

Who holds them in the hollow of his hand;
His purpose gleaming through the march of things.
Whatever discord direful intervene,
The soul yet wears an inner light serene;
This let us follow, learning, step by step,
The mystic meaning of the changeful time,
The training time for unknown centuries.
We may rejoice in fortune, undisturb'd,
By higher hopes, still let them lure us on;
It is not well to let our journey end
On humble heights, yet should the faithful soul
Be satisfied to stand there on the way,
Nor need the loftier ridges mar its joy.
'Tis thus with nations,—if the wiser laws
And purer manners shine on cliffs unscaled,
Yet these are not the crags of yesterday,
But some stage further in the march of mind.
Thus hoping, learn to baffle dull distrust
In human progress—is the future drear?
When clouds are dark they will be quickly torn,
And mellow sunlight 'yond the thunder shines.
Blue bells are clinging on the precipice,
A smiling signal of green banks beyond;
O'er the dark torrent cauldron terrible,
Undaunted, twittering, wings the quiet dove
Her all-confiding flight,—we list to these
And trust in good, the final goal of ill.
Eternal Justice mortals may divert
For moments only, for their little rage
Is spent as vain as water that would quench
The bright Aurora streaming to the stars.
Know from the lips of nature all is well,
For she is prudent, and when seed is sown,
The soil will only foster forth the grain.

Let us be faithful in the right, and learn,
From the indomitable Roman heart,
Not to despair on Cannæ's lurid day.

There is a very rich inheritance,
Bequeathed by God's beneficence to man,
In the sweet fruits of the remember'd years,
That bygone era, full of broken lights,
Throws glimmering lustre on the future field :
And, could we sever duly chaff from grain,
No boon were greater than the blended gift.
God leaves the old earth as he joins the new,
Yet he *was* there, and we should reverence it.
The track he left is holy ; may the light
From that great presence often gleam on me !
The past is all our own, immutable
It only rests :—I love its memories ;
And oft, amid the tumult of the day,
Its soothing voices swim athwart my soul ;
As distant Sabbath-bells, still ringing clear,
In set slow music o'er the waste of years—
How full of kind instruction—gentle dreams !
From our own wanderings, seen in fading light,
And fruitful histories of early friends.
E'en in the shades of death, the spirit finds
A nourishment divine ; the cypress grove
Lies with a spectral glory on the hill :
The valley stretches by a road of pines.
We look behind us where the pathway melts
In distant purple, and the waving trees
Still fan our foreheads.—Ah, how oft that Past
Comes on me, like a phantom of the night,
And leaning softly on my shoulder, looks
Into my eyes with her unfathom'd gaze,

So sunny, yet so sad and full of tears,
That, as when 'wildered by the gleaming clouds,
Or some mysterious images of joy,
I sink into a strange and fitful dream
Until I wonder where and when I live;
And then awakening ask if time has given
A gift so precious as it stole away.
The past is *not* all useless, I will keep
A portion of her splendours for my own.
As silver radiance on the green hill-side,
When the white mists are rippling o'er the crags,
Exalts the castled heights it seems to crown,
So may remembrance make an hour divine.
Yet, let me never wear it as a robe,
To wrap around me, as the mountain draws,
Too oft, the drenching mantles to its base.
That past must serve the future, and the day
Which glows above us,—for a hallow'd end
May the memorial melodies endure,
The phantoms of our childhood be eterne!
These are, as peaks above the mazy clouds,
Or sunny isles in dim Oblivion's sea,
High landmarks of a sunken continent.
They teach us deeply, but we dare not stay
E'en 'neath the shadow of the pyramids,
While life's great ocean ever westward rolls,
And new Hesperias, younger Edens rise.
Howe'er we love the quiet of a home,
Where clustering roses and dark ivy twine
Fair linnet arbours on the leafy wall;
We may not longer rest within the groves,
Unmindful of the tasks that call us forth,
Out of the stillness;—we grow dull to life,
And blind to glories that are floating round

Our daily watches—as the simple herd
Looks on th' accustomed constellations calm,
Unstirred by their majestic minstrelsy :
And yet were all those stars to gleam at once,
From the blue depths of the untrodden night,
There were no eye among philosophers
Could glance unblinded on their shining shoals.

These times are not so leaden—when we look
With a fresh heart, they seem as fair as ever.
The fitful glimpses of the infinite,
Beyond the mystic curtain that confines
Our little life, are dazzling as of old.
Heaven has not lost its grandeur, by a star,
'Mong all the myriads of the Eden days.
Earth yet retains her splendours, ever girt
By the unfading glories of the morn.
For dawn is breaking o'er some granite cliff
Now and each moment, with reviving breath ;
The snowy Alps are burning in the sun,
Irradiate beacons, still their summits throw
Gigantic shadows round the tomb of Tell :
The moonlight glistens o'er unwearied streams :
Unshorn Apollo gleams across the deep :
The waves exult in laughter all untold
As when the Titan sang :—I see him now,
O'er the long ocean, spread his wings of light ;
And as I gaze on yonder craggy isle,
That shoots refulgent from the flaming seas,
'Tis Ithaca to me,—and I exclaim,
What e'er befall, God's grace is bountiful,
That I have seen such bright magnificence !
Those hills of ours that raise submissively
Their silent arms unto th' engulfing sky,

Have tales to tell of heroes stout and brave
As any leagued beneath the walls of Troy.
We claim their deeds immortal, as we name
Our Hector—dauntless Knight of Ellerslie ;
And he who landed on rough Carrick's shore,
A match for great Pelides any day ;
The lonely Covenanters on the moor—
Souls fit to form a new Thermopylæ.
These fell or rose victorious not in vain ;
They live within our hearts,—and, in the glens,
The solemn shadows in the nightly breeze
Recall them still while mountain torrents chaunt
The annals of their all eternal story ;
And make new poets, as they wander by,
To sing their glory ;—in our iron age,
Not yet is any lack of godlike men.
If chiefs are less majestic, nobler now
Are those who serve them ; and a wider power
Exalts the race ; and later Argos sail,
To bear the fleece across remoter waves,
The great Ulysses and his comrades still
Inspire some new Columbus' gallant crew.

I too will answer to their lofty call ;
And let them lead me, with a stronger hand,
Beyond the twilight to the western stars.
I will push off—and leave the Syren shores,
Nor longer catch at shadows,—dream of ease
A listless floating on the sunny bays,
There are enough of depths unknown and dark
To sound far out in yonder seething sea.
We have too many players—any man
Can sing of past and future, as he deems
The tide runs back or flows ; but life and death

Demand the aid of earnest heart and hand.
Still strife is raging ; though the battles change,
Their issues last ;—amid the storms of time,
We each may leave an impress, by the weight
Of some true deed,—the high inheritance
Left by the gods to mortals, Eden-barr'd.
If discord lies before us, we are sent
To win a way across the wilderness,
And claim high place, that ceaseless effort earns.
To bring back order to the weary world,
And balance might among the nations, weigh
The rights of man in justice' even scale,
Or wage unyielding war on tyranny.
This is no work for any musing mood,
By the warm hearth, in cheerful talk and song,
Or dreaming in the lazy afternoons,
But stern hard duty for the day to do ;
This ushers in the reign of peace and joy ;
And this alone prepares the golden year,
To broaden brightly over happy lands.
Let each be constant to this task, and soon
Our life shall summer full of Eden days,
And all exult in the rejoicing noon ;
Until our sunset death wakes up the dawn,
While the twin glories blaze athwart the sky,
In mingled light of hope and memory ;
And only melt serenely from the view,
When calm night reigns, and all the silent stars.

I haste to draw my bow, and though the air
Close round the arrow, as it flees afar,
Its force has not been spent on vanity.
The shaft may quiver, smiting to the core
The targe of ills I aim'd to dissipate.

Each *has* a task in this unresting age ;
Mine will I venture, if it be to forge
The lance and shield for use of braver men,
Myself unfitted for the front of war.
Or by long sleep degraded,—be content !
Assured that one blue sky bends down above,
And from the archway lean the watchful gods.
'Tis self and sloth obscure the voiceful air,
The sensual and the dark, the golden cloud :
No sounds so jarring as the discords dire
That will not leave us when we *are* alone.
Then let us look within, and take good heed
Lest our false passions 'scape in borrow'd hues ;
Our pride look modest—or a cold heart pure.
Men say that they are little, fretfully,
And mean their greatness is unjustly quell'd ;
The haughtiest spirits are the least content :
And they who trumpet feigned impotence,
Have the least grains of true humility.
O vain excuse for resting yet awhile !
None are born worthless ; to the feeblest mind
There is a daily choice of right and wrong,
And all have power to choose : we dare believe
The meanest mortal has celestial hours,
When motion stirs within his crusted shell,
And heat, expanding, bids the wings unfold.
Then let us know—however weak we seem—
Work lies before us, we have strength to do ;
Each thread is needful in the loom of time.
When patient efforts win successful close,
Not we alone, but half mankind, will know
Some duty done ; and, in a future day,
This deed of ours may reach the farthest Ind.
So interwoven is the Universe,

That when I lift this pebble from its bed,
I stir Orion and the Pleiades.
This earth is full of mirrors ; if we raise
A torch-light in the avenues of fame,
'Tis thrown from one unto another far ;
Till lamps blaze countless, as the beacon fires,
When the descending sunlight strikes the hill,
And flings its radiance on from Alp to Alp.

O could I break the chrysallis and flee
Across my own delays that hem the sky,
In spite of weakness, the long trail of sin,
That, like keen caustic, darkly seers the soul—
And unforgotten sorrowings shadowing,
I feel that even now I dare ascend
Above yon shining height, from whence I trust
To watch the ocean winding round the land,
Within whose bosom sleep Hesperides ;
Or catch the gleam of more majestic realms,
As some lone traveller sees beyond the hills
A loftier mountain that he never knew.
I must be up and doing—in the van,
Lo, those are rushing whom I thought to pass !
But I still tarry in the rear of time,
With looks reverted, aimless—lo, they run,
Before me calmly, to the serried ranks !
I, with a birthright nobler far than they,
Can scarce behold their triumph wistfully.
Is this *my* destiny? ye waves reply.
In wilder strain than mellow music now,
Ye answer-bearing tidings from a land—
Is that the sun upon it? I must go—
There lies the goal, whatever winds may blow !
My course is thither ; let the tempest rage,

My bark may founder, but it shall not turn.
'Neath the deep sea or near the happy isles
Some morn shall find my anchor—I will try.

I see the plain of struggling nations stretch,
Out far before me, in a cloudy mist ;
And could I mingle 'mid the clashing steel,
And leave a trace of my advancing way,
Some fiery stamp to sever right and wrong,
'Twere better than the dalliance and delight,
With sunny Naiads 'mong autumnal leaves,
And all the revels of the Grecian gods.
Then let the scoffers have their fill of scorn,
Until the dashing torrent dance them down,
They may not turn me from the way I go,
With the great guidance of that vanish'd voice.
I will pursue my path across the plain ;
And if the bright sun greet me, and the air
Blown fresh from fields of clover, let me joy
In Nature's bounty, and adore the gods.
If thunder threaten ; it has pass'd before,
And I will think it harmless till it falls.
I will not bring the shadow from the clouds
To press the nearer by foreboding fears.
I know that there are forests deep, and glooms
Where lies the road, for I have sojourn'd long
And sorrow'd in them—shades as well as suns
Make up the chequer'd radiance of the world.
The all-unfathom'd mystery of death,
That darkest shadow, leaves funereal trace,
No stars can brighten, till we fade ourselves,
And seek solution in the fuller day.
I bear the burden of the ills I feel,
And need not search for others—let them come—

I will not vex my brain with empty schemes.
Nor let a ghastly visage mar the joy
That lives in beauty—I will hold the hope
Of good in everything—nor lonely pine,
With discontent—nor be confused in crowds—
Nor moan perplex'd with philosophic doubts,
Or quell them with the creeds of other men.
'Tis God alone and our own wills can move
The inner soul to its true faithfulness.
Let nature guide me on to higher things,
And the clear beacons of the hero souls,
That shed a lustre from the lands above
On this our own, our daily iron age.
Where duty calls may I rejoice to run,
And wake at early morn, and work till eve.
Nor dream and dream until the damp dew falls,
Thus musing late I sung with wider range.

This tide of time is foaming on ;
The trailing years have come and gone ;
In lustre crown'd, or sorrow drown'd,
Still roll the seasons, with a music low,
And with their circling force us forward as they flow.

'Mong tones of harp and bugle horn,
At dewy eve or ruddy morn,
There is a voice, that cries rejoice,
Beyond our mourning though the echoes fall,
With many a wailing dirge slow thrilling through them all.

It teaches, with an iron will,
Conquering on and trusting still,
To hope for light from darkest night ;
While Winter shivers on the icy wold,
To wait for Spring and watch the early rose unfold.

Light shakes the shadows of the tomb ;
On cold grey stones gay flow'rets bloom ;
The evil days are lit by rays ;
As through thick mist a roseate lustre glows,
Or red dawn flings a fire across the pallid snows.

A System through Disorder runs ;
And, in the chaunt of all the suns,
That law we hear, the purer ear
Marks in the tune of centuries and lands,
From yonder endless shores of ever golden sands.

The glories of the olden time
Have not yet left the starry clime :
Still nature smiles, on cares and wiles ;
Amid her forests freely wave the pines ;
Yet laugh the sunlit leaves in greenly glittering lines.

In all her symbols, more and more,
Earth warns us, louder than before,
To till the soil, with daily toil :
And is this high Evangel less divine
Than all the splendours, that serene in bygone annals shine ?

Confusion only seems to reign ;
And death is but an idle strain !
Beyond the ken of mortal men,
Eternal life, the aye-enduring song,
Far o'er unclamber'd hills, in cadence, rolls along.

While worlds and stars together wend,
Men ask the limit whither tend
The ceaseless streams, are olden dreams
Of golden Eden fields, in other lands,
Revived in living truth, beyond the shrouded strands ?

Each for himself the unknown theme
Must handle, in his purest dream,
And each may tell, as seemeth well,
The fitful glimpses he has dimly won
From those untrodden shores beneath the sunken sun.

I cannot find a wish that wills
To settle calmly, as the rills,
From mountain free, in silent sea;
Nor can I deem our fruitful motions close,
Crown'd by the touch of Death, in such entranced repose.

The ocean sings in sounding waves,
The shore re-echoes in her caves,
The sun—the shower, on cliff and bower,
The surge at eve, on soaring mountain crest,
The end of mortal toil is not an endless rest.

But dare our impotence divine
The mysteries that yonder shine?
Beauty and right may there unite
In closer league,—weak efforts fail
To guess the nobler modes of Life, behind the Veil!

Thus ran my chaunt, when, o'er the ridge, I saw
The first long surf of morning lustre climb.
I rose refresh'd by the reviving breeze;
And trod the fields the better for my dream;
For when again I mused on ocean crags,
And heard the breakers breaking on the shore,
'Twas to draw other meanings, from the waves,
Than the low murmurs of a mournful past,
The lingering memories of a GOLDEN AGE.

“O, Tenebris Tantis.”

(LUCRETIUS.)

O THOU who first mad'st light refulgent shine
From such drear darkness, and didst fairly throw
Round daily life a radiance so divine;
O Might of Hellas—where thy traces show
The pathway, I am fain to journey slow:
O glory of the Greeks, I follow thee—
Not that I emulate, but long to know
Thy truth in love and humble fealty:
How can the swallow mate the swan in minstrelsy?

How dare the kid, in trembling weakness, vie
With the fleet course of the impetuous steed!
Great sire of Science, thou dost deign supply
Paternal precepts for thy nurslings' need;
And as the bees, from all the flowery mead,
Cull varied sweets, so on thy peerless page,
Illustrious teacher, we thy children feed;
Thy golden oracles our thoughts engage:
Immortal golden fruit, to bloom from age to age.

Soon as thy wisdom utter'd, loud and bold,
The truth of things, that in thy mind arose,
Vain terrors flee—the world's walls unfold—
The boundless void a vast procession shows,
Lo, the great gods!—their mansions of repose,
Which neither winds do shake, nor rain-clouds blight,
And never drifting of white frosted snows
Pollutes the blest abodes—but calm and bright,
Smiles the unruffled sky with far expanded light.

Glad nature yields delight, nor ere appear
Ills that can mar the spirits pure serene;
But nowhere are the plains of Acheron drear
Beheld—nor lieth any land to screen
The void beneath, lest all therein be seen;
'Mid those dread themes, my inmost soul is sway'd
By holy joy; an awful transport, keen,
Thrills through my heart—that, widely open laid,
The face of things so fair is by thy power display'd.

“De Contemnenda Morte.”

(LUCRETIVS.)

SAY, did the voice of Nature stern address
Some one repining man, and thus arraign,—
“Why wilt thou, mortal, languish in distress,
And mourn the doom of death in plaintive strain?
For if thy lot of life was joy and gain,
And all its bounties have not flown away;
As water in a leaking jar, in vain,
Retire, content—as guest from banquet gay,—
And all thy foolish cares in calm deep silence lay.

“But if the sum of all thou hast enjoy’d
Is nought or only ill, yet dost thou try
To add to that which is an empty void,
Another space to perish thanklessly?
Shouldst thou not cease with wasteful days, and die?
Taking an endless rest where toil is o’er,
For there is nothing left to gratify,
That I can gather from the future store:
Change dies—all things return the same for evermore.

“ E’en if long years waste not thy weary frame,
Nor worn limbs languish, in a wan decay,
Yet all things moving still remain the same ;
Wert thou to live beyond the ages’ sway,
Or yielding never, to endure for aye.”
How dare we answer but that nature’s scorn
Were justly earn’d, and duly urged the fray ?
But hear some wight, of riper years, forlorn,
Unduly, o’er death’s doom, in wailing accents, mourn.

Him she may censure in severer tone,—
“ Hence idle tears ! away complaining cries !
Thou, fool, hast cull’d life’s fruit, and makest moan
After the past, where all thy longing lies,
While thou durst still the present day despise ;
So is thy life, unused, all vainly fled ;
’Tis thus death’s sudden summons to arise
Falls on thy ear unlook’d-for, and a dread :
Fills thee to leave the feast, and join the dreary dead.

“ Dismiss unworthy thoughts—untimely fear,
Withdraw, with equal mind, and grant their due
To others, for the destined hour is near !”
Right were that censure—the stern warning true,
The old still changeth, giving place to new ;
One from another springs, nought meets the thrall
Of utter Hades—but to future view ;
Matter descending now, when ages call—
Shall rise, then sink as thou, and rise again to fall.

“ Thus one from other never fails to grow,
And life for use alone was given to man ;
Look now, to us, the ages long ago,
Those ancient annals ere our life began,

How nothing are they, and the way they ran.”
Thus Nature lets us in a mirror peep,
The time to come, beyond our death to scan,
Is there aught dismal there to make us weep?
Nay, do not all things rest more still than any sleep?

The Christmas Messenger.

(ADOLF HAIN.)

INTO a garret drearily,
Through chinks the snow is blown;
With folded hands and bended knee,
Who prayeth there alone?

The tapers on the Christmas tree
From over yonder glance,
They fall upon a worn and dree
And pallid countenance.

And wilt thou not behold how bright
Yon festive lustres gleam?
The snow, the darkness of the night,
They lull him to a dream.

But hark! the Christmas messenger
Ascends all soft and slow;—
Art slumbering even yet—dost hear?
'Tis he that knocketh low.

It taps, a lovely youth's light hand,
His raiment white and fair;
He enters, with a mystic wand,
And myrtle in his hair.

He leans down toward the weary face,
And whispers in his ear;—
Ah! art thou singing Christmas lays,
To this pale sleeper here?

He rests upon him, with his wand,
Hush'd as the grave, until,
Quiet as ghosts in spirit land;
He leaves, and all is still.

Nor ever weary does he cease,
From house to house, to tread,
And over all there settles peace,
As grief and care has fled.

He bringeth gifts so fair and bright,
And sorrow vanisheth;
Dost know the youth of Christmas night?
The blessed Angel DEATH —

Isis Celata.

O'ER Life's dread and unseen portals,
Hovers dark a mystic veil,
Bounding all the thoughts of mortals;
What it shrouds their guesses fail
To dream of or divine.

'Tis the veil that hides for ever,
'Mid the mists, the silent land;
Life beholds it lifted never,
Death extends a spectral hand,
And it riseth at the sign.

Then the revelation cometh, and in vision clear we see
Myriad glories unimagined,—thrill'd with central harmony.

Here on finite themes we ponder;
Hills and dales we all may know;
An eternal ocean yonder,
Keeps eternal ebb and flow,
Along untrodden shores.
Fain to track its way and winding,
We would sweep the veil aside;
Little deem we lustre blinding,
Floats above the boundless tide
No human search explores.

Never till, by change made stronger, we may stretch a
 deeper gaze,
 Far above earth's dim mirages, and our life's bewildering
 maze.

Flutters on the veil, concealing
 From the ken of mortal eyes,
 Realms where sound the anthems pealing,
 Through the march of centuries—
 The universal chime.

Holy spirits thither wending,
 Meet at call of vesper-bell;
 There is perfect rest unending,
 There secure the vanish'd dwell
 In never fading prime.

There the light of love ascendant, beacons o'er the rolling
 years,
 Faith is crown'd, and beauty, beaming, calmly smiles on
 restless fears.

Ceaseless—asking what this land is,
 Rings our ever faithless cry.
 "Tell us where the happy strand is,
 Let us join the blest, and *buy*
 Safe path across the wave."

Thick the curtain hangs before it;
 With the talisman of creeds,
 Folly boasts that peering o'er it,
 Man may tell the end of deeds
 Long garner'd in the grave.

Truth is steadfast!—idle trifling falters—guessing things
 like these;
 Taking for the stars transcendant, meteors flash'd on forest
 trees.

Few each era's prophet glances;
Sages give—as sacred lore,
Empty phantoms—fever'd fancies—
On the surface pictured o'er—
Fancies of hope and fear.
For that veil in varied motion,
Mortal ne'er can see around;
Yonder the encircling ocean,
Lies remote that none may sound,
Or its low-lapping, hear.
Would we list—there comes in answer, whistling of the
wind alone,
With the flapping of the folds amid the tempest's fiery tone.

Thus when Pride so falsely preaches,
Doubt denies there's aught behind;
Let them rave! our Father teaches
Both alike are deaf and blind,—
They only seem to know.
For the faithful rays are gleaming
Round the rim, and music mild:
As the sun through cloud-rack streaming
Visions Heaven to gentle child,
Where'er his glories glow,—
So, from faintly falling echoes of the choir and faces pale,
Pure hearts trust to hail the purer morning light behind the
veil.

In Memoriam.

“ An infant crying in the night,
And with no language but a cry.”

WHEN first thy radiance ceased to shine,
To me disconsolate there came
Some comfort in sweet songs divine,
That sought, in tuneful notes, to tame
Wild grief, for fate akin to mine.

They murmur'd with a music free ;
I sorrow'd gently as I read
The verse that spake so tenderly :
And, rising suddenly, I said,
“ 'Tis thus that I will sing of thee.”

But, drawing near thy grave, I found
Dread silence there so very still,
I could not lessen, by a sound,
The agony of one great ill,—
Thy form beneath th' insensate ground.

And ever since that woful glance,
Till late amid the wailing years,
I have been wrapp'd as in a trance ;
And grief, with inward-flowing tears,
Has choak'd my faintest utterance.

E'en now, on many a merry day,
I see, with shuddering amain,
Like a pale corpse on lonely way,
That dismal mound amid the rain,
And meditate on dark decay.

But the remedial force, that lies
In the benignant touch of time,
Now first permits my feeble cries
To take the form of tuneful rhyme,
While tears wash clear my clouded eyes.

No mourner for the silent dead
May set his sorrows into song,
Till, through the fiery furnace led,
His soul grows pure, from suffering long,
And faith is patient—fear has fled.

Angel Visits.

I too invoked for all around
The dawning of a golden year,
That tranquil blessings might abound,
And summer love, no winter sear.

But still I heard a whisper low,
And, half in rapture, half in fear,
The thought thrill'd through me, "None
may know,
Yet thou art with us list'ning here."

And under all they said or sung,
And cheerful words that cried, Rejoice!
By solemn accents strangely wrung,
I only heard the vanish'd voice.

A vanish'd voice—'twas never so!
It has been with me evermore,
Where nought beside can be, 'twill flow,
Nor cease to guide, till life is o'er.

Nor then, ah! then, shall love decay
When memory shall be knowledge made;
Unfading angels love for aye;
We meet beneath the cypress shade.

'Tis thy descending ever brings
This solemn sadness deep and sweet;
The rustling of an angel's wings
Hovers above—a moment fleet.

Then swift and far the glory soars,
To that long strand across the stream,
To join the saints on pearly shores,
And wonders mortal dare not dream.

But I am left to linger lone,
With care and sin in weary strife;
All in the wilderness to moan,
Without the sunlight of my life.

I wander weak, and seem to be
A fluttering moth with vain endeavour;
Like a river flows the wild wan sea,
I drift along for ever.

I tremble through death's dismal vale,
And deep in gloomy groves of doubt;
My flickering hopes and wishes fail—
I cannot ring my music out.

Yet why despair?—my spirit-fires
Are high or low; I laugh or weep,
As through the soul's Æolian lyres
The mighty winds majestic sweep.

E'en now its cadence, sad and slow,
Is swelling to a fuller sound;
The tides of inspiration flow
Afresh, and stronger faith is found.

When all our joy begins to freeze,
This breaks in twain the icy bond;
This looks across the clouds, and sees
A clearer gulf of stars beyond.

Their breath is mingled with the breeze
That wafts the message of the night;
Rich twilight glimmers through the trees,
As fair as any broader light.

Those stars, of a beyond they tell,
And thus of them the minstrel sings
Their chorus—grandest organ-swell
Throughout God's own cathedral rings.

Thus we in purest hours revere
His glory, love-like, free from fear,
And catch, with straining eye and ear,
Far echoes of the heavenly sphere.

Thus is it, in divinest hour,
The unseen harmonies proclaim
To me, the music of thy power,
And the faint murmurs of thy name.

E'en now thy shadow flutters by,
I hear the curtain faintly fall,
I feel thy sacred presence nigh,
I live in thee and conquer all.

Seven Sonnets.

I.

FLOWERS for the birthday—Song for bridal bowers,
And sunny isles, caress'd by laughing wave;
Dark weeds are fitter for the silent grave.
May light hearts rest, like gentle sleeping flowers,
'Mid wreathing beauty in their balmy hours!
Around me rather let the tempest rave
And howl in mountain gorges—I would brave
An outward strife while storm within me lours,
And let my gloom be in a mirror thrown,
Rather than murmur more at contrast bright.
Green leaves and sunshine, when the clouds have flown,
To cheerful spirits bring renew'd delight;
Grief loves to look on colours of its own,
And I to dwell, in silence, with the night.

II.

A SLUMBERING might is in the human soul,
That, stirr'd by God's breath, leaps into a flame,
And bids us mould our minds to higher aim.
I feel it now—my inner being's goal
Flashes before me; as the echoes roll
Full of the sound of thy immortal name,

My sensual mood I have decreed to tame,
And live henceforth beneath a stern control.
Now let all dangers and deceits assail
To change my course, nor hopes nor fears avail,
Nor weary hours; it is thy presence lends
Surpassing power; and, arm'd in triple mail,
I march 'mid tempests safe when this defends.

III.

WHILE the dim discords of our life resound,
The voiceful air and golden gleaming cloud
Are barr'd out from us, fetter'd by the shroud
That dreary sins and sorrows wrap around.
'Tis true that, ever and anon, there break
Bright flashes through our slumber, and awake
Our souls to action; we are driven among
Strong inspirations that we cannot quell,
As when the lyric sweep of lofty song,
Or oratory, full as ocean swell,
Resistless rushes; or, across long years,
One pale face shines, or deep voice calls aloud.
Yet soon, alas, the meteor disappears,
Its flickering lustre fainting in the crowd.

IV.

I HAD betrothed me to a heavenly bride;
Faithless I left her, ere my eager vow
Had ceased to sound. I see her beauty now,
And would again be resting by her side.
Oh! pure religion, with the ruthless tide,
I have been drifted far, I know not how,
O'er weary waters! I would lowly bow
Before thee in the dust. May I abide
Under thy wings, and weep in blissful shade.

Grant me in grace another trial-day,
 With my whole contrite heart wide open laid ;
 For thy returning summer-smile I pray.
 God is in heaven !—the demons are afraid ;
 This new alliance shall disdain decay.

V.

ALL hail, sweet seldom tears ! I welcome ye,
 Gushings of soul for ills that may be borne—
 As healing sap, when some light branch is torn,
 Oozes in sorrow from the tender tree—
 Those heart wounds sear not that are bleeding free.
 Cares may be measured in the scales of time
 That bid us weep ;—a melancholy rhyme—
 A mazy star, to dreaming eyes, may be
 The spell that bids the gentle fountains flow.
 Deep grief is ever dry, and utter woe,
 Beyond the tears of mere humanity,
 Binds our weak moanings with a prison bar,
 And, set in sacred silence, lies afar
 'Mid the drear tumbling of a lonely sea.

VI.

I HELD ambition of high destiny :
 Now is my noon, and no great task begun.
 Was my presumption vain, and must I run
 Content in common paths ? It cannot be !
 For, weak myself, I yet am heir to thee.
 The very word, like some ascending sun,
 Wakes up my spirit sinews, so that none,
 Or foe or fiend withstands. 'Tis not in me,
 This mystic power, but in thy light I shine ;
 With what a thrilling ecstasy of joy
 I leap, to feel thou livest ! It is mine

Yet to do something lasting. My employ
Shall be, to listening ages, to proclaim
Some faint far murmur'd echoes of thy name.

VII.

GREEN islands glitter o'er the long black seas ;
Repose lies under storm, and perfect calm
Beneath heart achings, with a soothing balm.
The clammy touch of the hard earth would freeze
Our flood of feeling ; but the still small voice
Awakes the living streams ; and we rejoice
Still to find beauty blooming 'neath decay,
Thankful that God has yet a dwelling there ;
And, as we wander on a desert way,
When weak faith flickers, and we would despair,
He guides us to an unsuspected spring—
Pure flowing waters, 'neath a sheltering palm :
Then hope revives, and we take heart to sing
The tuneful notes of an adoring psalm.

J. G.

ANOTHER dirge to damp the dying year,
Another song of mourning in the land ;
Dim death, descending, came with summons drear
To lead away another friendly hand.

Not all unripe did this sere leaf decay,
Declining peaceful as the setting sun ;
She, too, has left a halo on her way,
For one true life an honest course has run.

Alas ! the dirge recalls forgotten times,
Sad memory wakens at the mournful note ;
Her name still mingles with the morning chimes,
That round the golden years of childhood float.

Near those old homes—along the silent street,
I wander friendless, for the last has flown ;
My step the very walls were wont to greet,
But now I linger by the graves alone !

Song.

O SOFT is the red light shining
From the car of the setting sun,
The clouds above entwining
Their lustre into one !

The radiance o'er the waters,
The glow along the hill,
The stars, night's fairest daughters,
My soul with memories fill.

With love the earth adorning,
Why need the spirit grieve ?
In the breezy gales of morning,
The dewy fall of eve.

Ah ! sweet the voice is ringing
Across the wave so free ;
But there's never an angel singing
That's half so pure as thee.

The notes of dawn abounding,
Recall the sunny lea ;
But no music glad sounding
Is half so bright as thee.

Still are deep eyes far gleaming
But never more for me;
For the tide of my heart keeps streaming
On the love it lost in thee.

A Vision.

ALL afternoon I seem'd to lie
Scarce waking, more than half asleep,
As, through my spirit fitfully,
The strange night wind of memory
Swept, with a thrilling deep.

And, while I thought on nameless themes,
The silver sound of evening chimes,
The gentle sun's descending gleams,
Still mingling with my twilight dreams,
Rung out unwritten rhymes.

That night, when short calm sleep was o'er,
I seem'd to stand mysteriously,
Where I had never been before,
By the long solitary shore
Of some untravell'd sea.

A thick mist hung above the main,
O'er shadowy capes and isles it lay,
Till rose a far melodious strain ;
The tune I knew, but lost again ;
And dimness roll'd away.

Across the waves wild breezes stream'd,
Across the crisping waves I flew ;
Beyond a distant meteor gleam'd—
At length a ridge of mountains seem'd
To burst upon my view.

On unseen wings I reach'd the land ;
I saw great tides of lustre roll'd,
O'er purple hills, and close at hand
The waters welling up the strand,
Laving in floods of gold.

Around a vast primeval wood,
Dread phantoms of unearthly things,
With an uncertain substance, stood,
As when an elm on rapid flood
A flickering shadow flings.

I heard a dirge of music low ;
Like rustling lyre and organ swell,
I felt the full notes flow ;
I saw a blue star brighter glow—
'Twas thence the music fell.

It grew, and grew, and beam'd on me,
A most celestial moon benign ;
The mountains vanish'd and the sea ;
I find the central light in thee,
The source of song divine.

Though ne'er again thy form appears,
The perfect radiance of those eyes
Shall be enough for weary years ;
Ring ! ring for ever in my ears,
Ye mystic melodies.

Thou whispered'st low—the spheres replied ;
I shudder'd full of joy and dread ;
Thou lead'st me far—it is denied
To tell the glories I descried—
Ah ! soon the vision fled.

Then, with an aching void I stood ;
A wild storm swept a wasted plain ;
The wind thrill'd louder through the wood ;
I felt as if I never could
Dream that bright dream again

I saw a long black river run,
There lay a ship 'neath many stars ;
Amid the myriad hosts, the one
I saw when first my trance begun
Was glimmering through the spars.

Longingly toward the burning light
I soar'd above the coursing river,
While echoes roll'd along the night ;
But soon I fell on that far flight,
And seem'd to fall for ever.

And then I woke to dawning day,
And saw green meadows spangled o'er ;
It seem'd long years had pass'd away
Since the stream flow'd, where that ship lay,
Lapping the silent shore.

Sun and Shower.

I.

WE travell'd o'er the purple rim
Of hills that fade in olden time,
And heard the birds rejoicing hymn,
Melodious in the morning chime.

We wander'd through the forests green,
The glad leaves twitter'd in the breeze;
The broad light shiver'd far between,
And shadows fell on sunny leas.

The branches of the tufted shade
Bent down, and soft our faces fann'd;
The rustling trees and brooklets made
A pleasant murmur in the land.

The sky was loving—earth was gay—
While, hand in hand together,
We bask'd in love the live-long day,
And it was glorious weather!

II.

I journey o'er the mountains grey,
Of lonely lands, in latter years ;
And, on my melancholy way,
The plover's plaint salutes my ears.

I loiter through the forest dim,
And withering limbs of blanching trees
Moan in the cruel winds that skim
The surface of the angry seas.

The thick clouds frown, and swollen streams,
By tottering ruins, seething flow ;
A lurid beacon yonder gleams,
Across the dismal plain below.

The sky is lowering, earth is chill,
The rains fall fast on misty heather ;
My life is dull, my heart is ill,
And it is stormy weather !

III.

A bird is perch'd on ivied bough,
And many a gentle carol free,
Of other fields in fairer glow,
The livelong day he sings to me.

Of islands where the ocean laves,
With silver foam, the golden sands ;
The gentle music of the waves,
'Mid violet bowers, in fairy lands.

He sits, like Hope, with waiting wings,
A ray of sunlight through the gloom ;
Or some celestial thought, that flings
Its radiance o'er the silent tomb.

Ah yes! there is a joy in store,
And once again we'll roam together,
The happy pathways as of yore,
In far serener weather!

Ailsa Crag.

Ailsa Crag.

"*Vestigia Prisca.*"

I.

A SEA-GIRT precipice, in lonely rest,
Upstarting sheer from out the dark green deep;
I watch thee stedfast with thy column'd crest.
Whether the stars their silent vigils keep,
Or the bright lances of the morning sweep
Athwart the mountains, thou hast firmly stood
By night and day, with all undaunted steep;
Ages have roll'd, and thou art unsubdued,
A landmark calm and still, amid the weltering flood.

II.

Bathed in the sombre light of eventide,
The great sun slowly draws his shafts around,
While gently heaves the breast of ocean wide;
The wavelets murmuring with a mellow sound,
From thy gray base in playful mood rebound,
The sea beneath thee gleams with golden light;
In joyous quiet smiles the plain profound,
Set in the main o'er all the verge of sight,
Lit by the rays like gems, the islands glitter bright.

III.

Fair in the distance mark the sun-lit land,
Long Carrick's coast—the line of gay Cantire;
Far westward shines the dim-traced emerald strand;
High the surrounding battlements aspire,
And throw vast shadows in the fading fire.
See the majestic hills of Arran rise,
Wind-wrestling Goatfell and his rugged choir,
Argyll's tall ridges cleave the soaring skies,
Beyond the misty north the mighty Lomond lies.

IV.

Rude crag, thus mantled by a glorious scene,
Say—did the same encircle thee of yore?
From the first dawn primæval hast thou been
Girt by those heights, and frowning on this shore?
Thus art thou to abide the future o'er,
While o'er thy front the fitful tempest raves,
Beneath the waters roll for evermore,
The home of sea-birds—where eternal waves
Break into tuneful foam in their re-echoing caves?

V.

Unveil the past, and banish'd years recall;
Has nature round thee rested calm and still:
And do the surges only rise and fall?
Let History, with her mighty accents, thrill
Our ears with wonder, and the breezes fill
Full of amaze, telling a tale of thee,
And opening up, responsive to my will,
Forgotten times—make answer unto me,
Thus hast thou ever been—thus wilt thou ever be?

VI.

The solemn voice of Truth soon bids us know
 Repose a dream ;—the universe survey ;
 See all things with the tide of ages flow—
 Earth, sky, and ocean onward move for aye.
 Transition holds imperishable sway,
 And changes circling pass incessantly,
 As fowls of ocean, revelling with the spray,
 Around thy brow—O craggy Ailsa !—fly,
 Thou hadst a part in all, unseen by mortal eye.

VII.

From generation strange thy fiery birth—
 Far back in time, 'mid streams of lava red—
 Thou didst arise, and hail the shaking earth.
 Far other scenes were then beneath thee spread—
 Upon those shores did tropic monsters tread ;
 Growling among those caves hyenas ran,
 And mammoths vast 'mid verdant pastures fed.
 In early prime 'twas thus thy course began,
 Ere on the ancient world had dawn'd the race of man.

VIII.

Yet vaster changes hast thou seen than those,
 Since first the billows sported round thy base—
 Since from the deep thy giant form arose—
 The earth herself has run a mighty race,
 Far in the azure vault. The starry face
 Of heaven is altered ; for the world has gone
 Toward other realms, in gleaming gulfs of space.
 With the great sun thou hast been pacing on,
 Since o'er thy voiceless head far constellations shone.

IX.

Too vague are those stupendous mysteries
For mortal ears to grasp or comprehend.
Say what hast seen beneath those newer skies,
And to the history of man descend.
With nearer interest then we shall attend,
To hear old legends that thou knewest well—
How lived our heroes—to what issue tend
The great events in which they rose and fell ;
For thou hast watch'd them all, thou silent sentinel.

X.

Illustrious in the annals of our land,
Rose the grey morn of that eventful day,
When first the Northmen, toward this rugged strand,
Sent a long war-cry, and the fierce array
Of far white sails gleam'd o'er the briny bay.
Exultant conquerors tread the bounding floors,
Their long locks shine, their vessels cleave the spray,
They whirl right on to the alluring shores—
Bright banners wave above the dashing of their oars.

XI.

They vanish on the dim blue deep afar ;
But, swelling through the breeze, to thee there came
The clash of arms, the mingled din of war.
God saved old Scotland then—her peerless name
Shone more triumphant—with a wider fame ;
For baffled back the grizzly norsemen fled
In thick confusion pent—o'erwhelm'd with shame
Their monarch, while around rude wrecks were spread,
To the Orcadian isle a shatter'd remnant led.

XII.

With higher pride to later ages turn ;
Then shall our hearts with deeper ardour glow,
And patriotic zeal more warmly burn.
When Wallace let his dearest life-blood flow
In deadly struggle with the English foe,
Thou must have seen full oft the fiery glare
From blazing castle-towers, and heard the blow
Of battle ringing from the hills of Ayr,
When shouts of freedom, loud and shrilly, rent the air.

XIII.

Canst thou forget that memorable night,
When glimmering beacon, from the dusky strand,
Wide o'er the waters shed mysterious light,
A joyous signal to the watchful band
Beneath our wandering monarch's high command
To leave yon craggy island, and essay
To reach the rugged coast and rouse the land ?
They plough the waters ; its far-flashing ray
Entices on each bark, and cheers them by the way.

XIV.

The clang of mail is heard ; a steady splash
Of oars advancing, while the red fire shows
Their course across the deep as on they dash,
And all around a ruddy radiance throws,
As less and less the nearing distance grows,
Then, flickering on the tide, its lustre streams
Far out into the darkness ; now it glows
More brightly, and each warrior's armour gleams ;
They gain the shingly shore, and lose its dying beams.

XV.

Say, was the beacon kindled in that hour
By mortal hand, to guide them o'er the wave,
Or sent divinely by some guardian Power?
It led them safe, the chosen few and brave,
With high heroic hope, to die or save
Their well-loved country from a hated yoke;
Then to the Bruce the land a welcome gave;
He came and conquer'd—his avenging stroke
From all our Scottish shores the chains of slavery broke.

XVI.

All honour to his deathless name be given!
Whose hour of triumph with that day begun.
And still they say the luring fire from heaven,
That lit him to the throne so hardly won,
Gleams on the sea-beach when the day is done,—
Memorial ever of the sacred sign.
May liberty descend from sire to son,
And over all the light of freedom shine,
Apart from evil star, or influence malign.

XVII.

Alas! not all at once the world is free;
The fight for liberty is stern and long.
Full oft thou hast beheld, and still mayst see,
The transient victory of might and wrong;
But vainly despots bind with fetters strong,
And strive to make their tyranny secure;
The age progresses onward, and among
All things advancing, shall their sway endure:
Firm though they stand, 'tis vain;—their final fall is sure!

XVIII.

Ah ! who can tell through what a struggle dire
 Our land from out those ills triumphant rose !
 Still we would fain re-echo on our lyre
 The all imperishable names of those
 Who fronted death with dauntless heart, and chose
 To bide by truth ;—these shall for ever live
 Far from the reach of scowling bigot foes,
 Unto the nations ;—noble spirits give
 What shall remain for aye—all else is fugitive.

XIX.

Such were our Covenanters known of old,—
 A sound that yet each sombre valley fills.
 Heroically free ; of sternest mould,
 They worshipp'd God alone ; their iron wills
 Brook'd no command ; 'mong solitary hills
 Their psalms went up, a deathless minstrelsy ;
 Their organ was the rush of mountain rills,
 Their vaulted roof, like thine, the azure sky,—
 They pray'd and watch'd in arms, prepared to fight and
 die.

XX.

Along the ramparts of this rocky isle
 Long since the tide of war has ceased to rage ;
 At length in peace our gentle hamlets smile,
 No longer North and South keen contest wage,
 And hand to hand in hostile strife engage ;
 But far, in other regions of the world,
 Her friends and foes have seen, in every age,
 For right or wrong, the British flag unfurl'd,
 As, flashing o'er the seas, our fiery bolts are hurl'd.

XXI.

Yet once, too, lately, from yon southern shore,
In hour of deepest gloom, thou mightest hear
The sullen thunder of the cannon's roar,
When from the West the daring privateer
His path across thy seas was wont to steer.
Still in the Solway Firth men tell the tale
How the bold rover fill'd the coast with fear,
As to his birthplace came his dreaded sail,
In arms for the New World, he made thy country quail.

XXII.

Fit emblem of a most unnatural strife !
Thou must have gazed in sad and sullen mood,
When discord between kindred nations rife
Had roused a direful war o'er land and flood.
Then in unhappy contest flow'd the blood
Of son and father ;—couldst thou feel the stain
That fell on Britain's glory ?—Unsubdued,
Let Transatlantic Liberty remain
And long in future age her starry lustre reign !

XXIII.

In nowise can that tarnish'd page obscure
The glorious time when, stedfast and alone,
'Mid empires tottering, we stood secure,
Firm raised by Freedom ; high upon a throne,
Above the heaving throng, as some gray stone,
Like thee, O Ailsa, 'mid the waves at rest,
Round which the beating surges ceaseless moan,—
All Europe shook and crash'd ; the weak oppress'd
Our land the champion of their wrongs confess'd.

XXIV.

The lurid conqueror of half the world,
 With all resistless force, assail'd in vain
 This sea-girt isle;—for dread defiance hurl'd,
 In scornful pride, she wafted back disdain
 Of sounding threats, and firmly dared sustain
 The brunt of battle, friendless,—o'er and o'er,
 Victor alike on land and waving main,
 She gave her life-blood freedom to restore,
 And brought her smiling back, to reign from shore to
 shore.

XXV.

Then must thou oft have seen, for many a mile,
 Stretching beneath thy craggy peak afar,
 The ships of commerce glide, in lengthen'd file,
 With the dread convoy of the sloops of war,
 Lest hostile force the outward path should bar;
 But now across the waves the way lies free;
 Ascendant shines above the gentle star
 Of placid peace;—thus might it ever be.
 All honour to the mighty names that fought for liberty!

XXVI.

Fair shines that star; but answer, where are they
 Beneath whose helm the victory was won—
 Whose nod the nations hasten'd to obey?
 Where'er they be, their worldly task is done.
 Our last great chief his earthly course has run:
 While now the sun is setting on the wave,
 I hear the anthem peel for Wellington:
 The earth receives him near his compeer's grave,—
 'Neath Wren's tall dome low lie the bravest of the brave.

XXVII.

'Tis thus the short-lived race of man decays,
Swept ever on in time's relentless tide.
Now, with the noble dust of other days,
Our heroes slumber silent side by side.
What are we then, when we have lived and died,
Unknown dark sea towards which we all are wending ;
O'er Earth and Man, Change holds dominion wide ;
See, all things down her ringing grooves are tending,
And ever spinning round in ceaseless circles blending.

XXVIII.

Tell me, stern rock, amid the sea serene,
Calm watch-tower of the world, on thee I call,
Is there no rest ? A witness thou hast been,
In cycles old, of changes great and small ;
Thou standest firm while empires rise and fall,
And stately cities are in ruins laid.
What is the purpose hidden under all ?
Say ! for the billows have about thee play'd,
Foaming through many an age, and thou art undismay'd.

XXIX.

Is there no rest ? Does all creation sound
But as a rushing wind, and do we roll
For ever on, in never-ending round ?
Or are there laws that regulate the whole—
One aspiration and one final goal ?
What means it ! Is there far from human eye
A quiet haven for the human soul ?
What powers contend in earth, and sea, and sky,
'Mid storm and strife,—with whom shall be the mastery ?

XXX.

Thou dost not answer, little canst thou reck!
 Amid the surgings of eternity,
 Thou, too, art but a mote—the merest speck
 In the great stream. Above, once roll'd the sea;
 Wait yet a while, thou shalt no longer be:
 Then other shores and other crags shall rise,
 While o'er thy head the waves are seething free:
 Thy form that now the change of time defies,
 Is transient as the bird that round thee fluttering flies.

XXXI.

Yet there is rest, although thou know'st it not,
 A purpose gleaming through the march of things,
 With which all Change in every age is fraught.
 Of this, the music of the ocean sings,
 This, 'mid the tempest and the thunder, rings,
 To mark the mind's advance they all combine,
 And tell how soul ascends on soaring wings:
 Eternal progress is the law divine,
 Its high fulfilment *shall* for ever brightly shine.

XXXII.

Not vainly strove they, and not vainly fought,
 Whose hard-won victories thou didst admire;
 Still shall endure the mighty deeds they wrought,
 Stamp'd on the world in characters of fire.
 In every age, the glory of the sire
 Shall fill the son, with hopes of high renown,
 And in his breast deep thirst of fame inspire;
 Yes! they who struggled against fortune's frown,
 For Freedom, Justice, Truth, shall wear a lasting crown.

XXXIII.

'Twas not in vain pale martyrs died of yore,
The reek of Wishart kindled all the plain ;
When Wallace fell, the Bruce our standard bore,
Stirr'd by his deeds ;—thus every noble strain
Strengthens new hearts and fires to dare again,
And all true wrestlings have effect at last.
Of high achievements, high results remain ;
They “broaden freedom slowly down,” and cast
Bright lustre lighting up the shadow of the past.

XXXIV.

Full oft with blood yon purpling heaths were stain'd,
Along our valleys stern loud war shouts rung ;
By this, religious liberty was gain'd,
The richest gift of time—let every tongue
Join in the chaunt, and far and wide be sung
The hymn of thanks to those who won the day.
Their work is dear to Scotland ; this, among
The change of all things, shall endure for aye,
And beam across the world with undiminish'd ray.

XXXV.

There is a progress in this heaving earth ;
Firm efforts, noble hopes, lead onward still ;
O'er rocks and crags we reach our second birth.
Reason and Fancy, and a Hero's Will,
Undying radiance, through the ages, thrill.
In painful travailing, by toil severe,
The race of man ascends a rugged hill,
Yet ever to the golden line draws near,
While the domain of Mind increases year by year.

XXXVI.

Firm fix'd remain, in every land and clime,
 The stern undeviating paths of right,
 As aids to guide us o'er this sea of time ;
 And beaming rays of fair celestial light
 Illume, though faintly, e'en the darkest night.
 Let these our trembling doubts and fears dispel,
 Instilling fresher courage in the fight :
 Landmarks like thee, they cheer us on, and tell
 Some tidings from the shore where the immortals dwell.

XXXVII.

Duty remains, and God abides for ever ;
 Creator He, and guardian of mankind !
 The All-sustainer will desert us never ;
 The sovereign strength of things,—Almighty mind,
 By whom the earth and stars were first design'd,
 Who holds them in the hollow of His hand ;
 With Him the universe is intertwined,
 He deems the giant hills as grains of sand,
 And grasps what thy historians fail to understand.

XXXVIII.

Such are the daring heights the soul ascends
 In contemplating nature,—symphonies
 Harmonious ring around me—such as sends
 Some deep-toned organ down the aisles, or breeze
 Thridding a way among the rustling trees ;
 Gazing again upon thy royal head,
 I watch the setting light along the seas :
 Flames from the sun, who hails his glowing bed,
 Far o'er the purple waves, a gathering glory spread.

XXXIX.

'Tis thus, in meditative mood, we hear,
Deep voices 'mid the storm,—a heavenly song,
Loud pealing; and, with straining eye and ear,
In the dread void feel slowly sweep along
The march of unknown powers—majestic throng.
Audacious diver in the infinite,
To thee those forms are singing clear and strong,
Burning their mystic lamps; with mortal sight
Our KNOWLEDGE fails, but FAITH sees through the dusky
night.

XL.

To thee! O Ailsa! now I bid farewell,
The sea beats round thee,—while a dreary blast
Comes wuthering o'er thy steep,—the surges swell
More freely, and the sun has set at last.
If, from those legend annals of the past,
A glimmering lustre has by us been thrown
On strange events that hurry on so fast,
Grateful for all our converse has made known,
I leave thy rugged cliff on ocean all alone.

A Haven.

THE storm without is raging free,
The wind is howling, rain falls fast—
'Tis all the warmer here with thee.
There's music in the fitful blast
To lull our hearts to sweet repose.
How bright the evening ember glows!

Then let us scorn the angry rain,
That strives to enter all in vain,
The winds that shake the woods amain,
And trees that moan, as if in pain;
Think of the quiet skies above
The clouds, and tell our tale of love!

My heart was vex'd, in storm like this,
Till through the strife there shone afar,
With a delicious balm of bliss,
A very solitary star.
Ah, how it beam'd upon my night,
And guided safe, and led aright!

Love, hovering long, at last drew nigh,
And he is sovereign lord to me;
Whate'er betide, I live and die
Henceforth to him, and rest with thee.
Weary of toil and ocean foam;
In this dear haven is my home!

Lean down upon me from above,
Those lily arms around entwine;
Throw back thy raven locks, my love,
And let me see those eyes of thine!
Or let them sparkle brighter, laid
Within the dark luxurious shade.

In swimming orbs, when thus caress'd,
I watch love's languid lustre shine,
And closely clasp thy budding breast,
To meet the beating heart in mine.
Smile sweet again, with dewy glance,
To welcome our divinest trance!

We care not for the idle noise
Men make afar on land and sea,
Enough for us the perfect joys
Of loving in tranquillity.
Keep safe that shower of kisses warm;
Or, give them back, in case they harm!

Another kiss, then calmly sleep,
For know that I will guard thee well;
Whatever angry tempests sweep,
Here all content for aye to dwell.
Yea, this is empire, this a throne,
When thou art mine—my own, my own!

Day and Night.

THERE are some dawns that seem to chase away
All darkness, from the world, for evermore ;
It shines as if a long perennial day,
Would shine on ceaselessly from shore to shore.

Yet, when the growing darkness of the night,
Creeps onward, silent, from the eastern hill,
Soon the last gleanings of the setting light
Leave the dim world, alone, and sad, and chill.

Faint earth-lights flicker, in the vales forlorn ;
O'er hill and plain, thick throbbing lustres glare ;
And, though another younger day be born,
Who knows if there be ever one so fair !

There are some moments that appear to be
Destined to chase all darkness from the soul,
When the far gleams of immortality
Light up the universe, from pole to pole.

Soon, soon, the shadows of returning night
Surround the spirit ; and the joyous hour
Is but a recollection of delight ;
One ray in gloom, where storm-clouds gathering lour.

O'er all the surface of the sordid earth,
False phantoms lure, and failing hopes betray ;
No other glorious moment may have birth,
And we must stumble on our weary way.

Murmur no more ! but send a searching gaze,
Upward, beyond the dark world's prison bars.
When the sun sets, do not a thousand rays
Gleam down divinely, from the circling stars ?

Grope not along the barren soil, with eyes
Blind to the guiding mysteries above ;
There is almighty solace in the skies,
As, night and day, they sing Immortal Love.

Christmas.

WHILE weary winds, and winter clouds,
Sweep trailing o'er the pallid sky,
And the old year dies in dismal shrouds,
The festal days draw nigh.

Far out, among the lonely hills,
The snow-flake drifts; and, deep below
The surface of the summer rills,
The freezing waters flow.

Chill breezes tumbling down the height,
From cliff and crag are wuthering free;
The morn on yon bare peak is bright,
The moon across the lea.

The leaves beneath the tossing pines,
Lie shivering in the icy shade,
No longer laugh in glittering lines,
Or glance in dewy glade.

Why do we then rejoice, the time
Has grown so faint, the day so cold?
Why sound the bells a silver chime,
When the year is dim and old?

Why should we deem fresh gladness won,
As in the dawning light we stand,
Of a day to be when its hours have run,
 A footstep on the sand.

Wherefore? the fields may greener grow ;
And, ere the stars again return,
Good deeds may give the power to throw
 One white stone in the urn.

Dreamland.

'Tis all in vain your scoff at "idle rhyme"—
Ye men of sense—the songs that poets sing,
Those childish chauntings, have a wider wing
Than aught ye dream of. What is space or time,
Palace or hovel,—when a truth sublime
Breaks on the soul, from their imagining?
It is unreal! let it be. I fling
Your dim realities afar, and climb,
With their bright fancy, toward diviner light.
Around me roars the discord of your mart;
I reck no longer of the world of sight!
What matters it with what mean cares I part,
To lull me through some rich Arabian night.
Or feel great Richter streaming through my heart.

Solitude.

TALK as I may of action, and the good
Wrung out of humming cities, yet I long,
With a deep passion, to forsake this throng
For a dim vale, or unsuspected wood,
With sun and leaves. I sometimes think I could,
In earlier days, have lived most blest among
Those ancient monks, and swell'd their solemn song.
In cloisters calm and deep, the soul might brood,
All quietly,—while on the carven stone
Flicker'd the radiant saints;—or, chaunting, greet
The vesper music low—the organ swelling
Through long aisles like a sea. The noisy street
Unfits for worship—I must find a dwelling
To sing my psalms unto my God alone.

A Character.

THIS was a soul that nature seem'd to form
For either course well fitted, good or ill.
His rise was not, as that of some men, swift,
Clear and unerring, as a shaft well shot ;
But like an arrow with uneven discharge,
That quivers long, before its path be plain.
He was a waverer, toss'd from hand to hand ;
Raised by high thought—dragg'd down by low desires ;
Driven, as the weaver's shuttle, to and fro :
Debating at the cross-ways—long time lost
In maze irresolute : purposeless, and sway'd
By varying health, or luck, or shifting weather,
From one extreme unto its opposite.
Changeful in temper, power, and mood of mind ;
His palace garden running all to waste.
In courage fitful,—now with confidence
To face a host unarm'd,—now shrinking, scared
From willows rustling on his nightly way,
Waking the echoes of a shrouded guilt.
His fiery passions, and a nobler will,
Kept up incessant conflict, night and day,
With neither victor. High with flowing tide,
His ebb was low ; yet did he never reach
The lowest, for he never ceased to feel
The degradation of his mean employ.
From sloth recoiling, oft he rose and vow'd

To-morrow to be free, yet found it vain ;
His spirit encaged, and all its action cramp'd,
Inwound with adamantine chain of ill,
Link after link successive, barring hope.
Despising man, he dared not trust in God,
Nor ask diviner aid, because he swore
That he deserved it not,—'twere ill for us
At home, or far, in any land or sea,
If we must wait God's guard until we earn'd it.
Yes, this help wrought deliverance when his soul
Raised a wild cry against that blinded life,
On one fair morning, with a radiant dawn.
He shook, with strong convulsion, as he turn'd
At bay, like lion, on his passion fiends,
And sprang to do them battle. Step by step,
His heart grew purer out of troublous times,
As a deep pool of waters, long disturb'd,
Must settle calmly ere they show pure skies
Purely reflected ; thus, by slow degrees,
His clouded spirit glimmer'd back the stars.
Now he has triumph'd, and is known as one
Whose wrongs to others have been well atoned
By a long lifetime of beneficence ;
Those to himself by stern self-sacrifice ;
Winning God's grace by penitence and prayer.
Faithful and constant, he has cast aside
All blinding lures, nor those of sense alone,
But the fine luxuries of intellect
And fancy, roaming from the one clear aim,
To which his straining faculties would verge ;
Making his will become a destiny,
And gathering round him wisdom by his own.
More gentle for his dauntless energy ;
In his calm courage more compassionate ;
Self-centered, yet unselfish, scorning none ;

Finding in each a good to fit some niche
Yet vacant in his heart; regarding much
The love of man, yet of applause unearn'd,
Or vain contempt, regardless; making way
'Mong waves of tumult, as a glowing light
Beats back the darkness;—from success,—defeat,
Garnering knowledge and content with all.
Unruffled, not with the cheap calm of those
Of soul too shallow to be stirr'd by storm,
But with the burning lambent flame of old
Stirr'd by the gust that quenches weaker fires,
Yet bound by stern control, that sends its blasts
To forge true metal—so that passion quell'd,
Is slave, no longer sovereign, to his will.
His inspiration burning strong and clear,
Not with a fitful glare—this makes him calm,
Nor lukewarm, or, with half-regardant eye,
Viewing light only, as of yore the glooms,
That cross the flickering radiance of the world;
But many-sided, glancing all things through,
As one who walks along the ridge, and sees
The valleys stretching far, on either side.
He has so firm'd his mind, his very form
Is chisell'd into strong solidity.
Those massive lines which might have fallen to mark
The features of some sensual demon bold,
Are gather'd into strength, as is his soul.
'Tis thus, somehow, with all—we each receive
From God and nature but the potter's clay,
Which we must mould in shape, or foul or fair;
For this, and this alone, accountable.

Song.

(FROM HEINE.)

THE May is come, and fairly
The flowers and foliage blow,
And, through the azure rarely,
The glittering cloudlets go.

The nightingales are singing
Above on the leafy tree;
The snowy lambs are springing
In the soft and verdant lea.

For me no singing and springing!
I lie in the grass unwell;
I list to far bells ringing;
My dreams—I cannot tell.

The River Life.

FALLING somehow from the sky,
Pearly springs the quiet rill ;
Singing to the stars on high,
Clear it runs o'er heath and hill.

See the broad stream impetuous flows,
In turbid course, across the plain,
Through many a dusky city goes,
And bears from each a deeper stain.

The mighty river to the ocean rolls ;
And all the gather'd blackness of its tide
The calm main sinks beneath the hidden shoals,
And wafts pure waters o'er its bosom wide.

Falling from the heavens' dome,
Sweetly springs the gentle child ;
Pure it lives in early home,
Trusting ever, unbeguiled.

Soon in the busy mart of life
Man mingles, bearing many a stain,
Nor can he, 'mid the jarring strife,
Receive his spotless heart again,

Till his course drifts him onward to the sea,
With all the chequer'd darkness of his soul—
There rests a power in mighty Death to free
The heart from sin, and make the spirit whole.

An Obituary.

(L. SCHNABEL.)

THE one he has dauntlessly offer'd
His life, on the blood-red plain ;
The other has silently suffer'd,—
A hero of mightier grain.

The warrior, of danger unheeding,
Has battled, and laurels won ;
The other has also been bleeding,
But that was known to none.

Calmly his farewell taking,
In conquest *he* fell with the brave ;
The heart of the other was breaking,
Yet sank he with smiles to the grave.

Ebening Lake.

'Tis even in the summer sky
A holy calm is overspread;
Above far gleaming islands lie,
And shoals of cloudlets fringed o'erhead,
Stream bright across the deeper bed.

As layer on layer they drift along,
In fleecy rippling o'er the blue,
It is as if the thoughts that throng
The heart's own heaven, in varied hue,
Thus o'er the deeper silence flew.

The portals of the setting sun
Are closing, o'er the streaming light;
As on blest spirits, that have won
Celestial path to radiance bright;
And leave a quiet with the night.

Stars falter forth,—the moon divine,
O'er the dark cliff, in flooding rill,
Begins to make a golden line;
Beneath the shade of yonder hill
The little lake is lying still.

Down the green slopes the light cascade,
In murmuring music, makes its way ;
The leaves are rustling, through the glade ;
The rippling wavelets, as they play,
Sing weary nature's lullaby.

White vapours rest along the shore,
White cottage fires begin to glow,
And throw a spreading lustre, o'er
The glimmering silvery sheen below ;
The ghostly moon yet rises slow.

And many a tinkling vesper bell,
From village spire, in choral close,
Rings, through the mist, the day's farewell.
The green-woods wave—the water flows—
Still chaunting peace and hush'd repose.

Where'er I roam across the seas,
The voices of a happy band
Shall wake the memory of these,
By the calm lake and loving strand.
Ah, restful dream of Faeryland !

The Fall of Psammenitus.

(AN EXTRACT.)

* * * *

CEASED the long tumult of that lurid day,
Deep hush'd repose broods o'er the hollow land,
And up the solemn valley of the Nile,
Slowly the fringes of the evening creep.
Now hangs the hazy curtain of the sun,
In sultry lustre on the silent shores;
Few fitful breezes stir the peaceful palms,
That wave their clusters in the fading light,
And throw the spacious shadow of their leaves,
To shift and spread along the rushing stream.
The noon has left a mist among the groves,
And long pale vapours, dash'd with radiance, sweep
Ghost-like, athwart the dusky summer sky;
O'er the broad sheet of golden waters, glow
The purple gleams of the descending day.
Sadly the sacred Ibis skims the wave;
The wavelets and the sedgy banks unite,
To hymn a most melodious mournful dirge;
And Memnon, smitten by the setting rays,
Sends forth a wierd and tuneful song of woe.

Translations from the Latin Poets.



Tibullus.

LIB. I.—ELEGY VII.

THIS morn the sister fates have sung,
Weaving the threads, no power among
The gods can e'er unwind.
That this was he who should subdue
Proud Aquitaine—the gallant crew
Of conquer'd Atax bind—
Time has reveal'd the issue true.
Rome's youth behold long triumphs new,
And chain'd the chiefs of war.
But thee, Messala, snow-white steeds,
While laurel decorates thy deeds,
Bear, in an ivory car.
Not without me thy hard-won fame;
The Pyrenees attest my claim,
And Santogne's sounding shore;
Bear witness, Arar, rapid Rhone,
Garonne, and realms the Liger lone
Serenely ripples o'er.
Or, Gnidus, shall I sing of thee,
That glidest silent to the sea,
With gentle azure tides?

How Taurus, wrapt in icy shrouds,
Whose summit cleaves the highest clouds,
Cilicia's land divides ;

How, all unharm'd, the holy dove
Flies through thick cities and above,
In Syrian Palestine.

Or Tyre, first taught to trust the deep,
Looks forth, from citadels that keep
Watch o'er the waving brine ;

When Sirius cleaves the thirsty fields,
How fertilising Nilus yields
Fair floods, in summer time.

In what far lands begins thy course,
Tell, Father Nile, thy mystic source,
Hid in an unknown clime.

Thy land demands not showers in vain,
Nor is the grass, on scorching plain,
In prayer to Pluvius bent—

Egyptian youths still sing of thee,
While to the gods they bow the knee,
Or Apis lost lament.

'Twas great Osiris, artful hand,
First made the plough, to tempt the land,
Tried by an iron share.

He first, into the virgin ground,
Entrusted seeds, and apples found,
On trees unwont to bear.

He taught the tender branch to aid,
With stakes, and prune, with stubborn blade,
The tendrils of the vine.

Press'd by the tread of rural feet,
The mellow grape gave juices sweet,—
For him first flow'd the wine.

This nectar tunes the voice to lead
The choir, and stirs the limbs to tread
 A dance in measured air.
'Tis Bacchus bids the reaper rest,
Relieves his heart, with toil oppress'd,
 Of sorrow and of care.
To weary men, in fetters bound,
He brings repose, e'en 'mid the sound
 And clank of iron fell.
Away with grief, it suits not thee,
Osiris, but the chaunt and glee,
 And light love fitting well;
But clustering ivy, varied rose,
And the rich saffron robe that flows,
 Full to thy tender feet;
The Tyrian vest, the flute's low strains,
And osier basket, that contains
 Relics, no eye may meet.
Come, then, Messala, join the games,
While dance, and song, and wine proclaims
 Thy genius' natal day.
Down from his neck and shining hair
Drop perfumes, and his temples wear
 Light garlands, soft and gay.
Haste hither! I, while censers swing,
For thee, a cake of honey bring,
 Gather'd in Grecian wold.
Long may thy springing race aspire
To raise the glory of their sire,
 Honour'd when thou art old.
Nor leave unsung yon spacious road,
Which ancient Alba's household god,
 And Tuscan lands survey.

Here, by thy wealth convey'd, is strown
The gritty rock—together thrown,
 Firm flints thy art display.
For this the peasant sings thy praise,
As home, from town, at e'en, he strays,
 Nor stumbles on his way.
Do thou, O natal morn appear,
Renown'd in song—return each year,
 Fairer, and fairer aye.

Obid.

MORS TIBULLI.

IF bright Aurora mourn'd for Memnon's fate,
Or the fair Thetis wept Achilles slain,
And the sad sorrows, that on mortals wait,
Can ever move celestial hearts with pain,

Come, doleful Elegy,—too just a name!
Unbind thy tresses fair, in loose attire;
For he thy bard, the herald of thy fame,
Tibullus, burns on the funereal pyre.

Ah lifeless corse! lo, Venus' boy draws near
With upturn'd quiver, and with shatter'd bow!
His torch extinguish'd; see him, toward the bier,
With drooping wings, disconsolately go.

He smites his heaving breast, with cruel stroke;
Those straggling locks, his neck all strewn around,
Receive the tears, that fastly trickling flow,
While sobs convulsive from his lips resound.

In guise like this, Iulus, when of yore
His dear Æneas died, he sorrowing went ;
Now Venus wails, as when the raging boar
The tender thigh of her Adonis rent.

We bards are named the gods' peculiar care ;
Nay, some declare that poets are divine :
Yet forward death no holy thing can scare,
'Round all his dismal arms he dares entwine.

Did Orpheus' mother aid or Linus' sire ?
That one subdued fierce lions by his song
Avail'd not ; and, they say, with plaintive lyre
The god mourn'd Linus, woods and glades among.

Mæonides, from whose perennial lay
Flow the rich founts of the Pierian wave,
To wet the lips of bards, one dismal day
Sent down to Orcus and the gloomy grave.

Him, too, Avernus holds, in drear employ,
Only his songs escape the greedy pile ;
His work remains—the mighty wars of Troy—
And the slow web, unwove by nightly guile.

If *Nemesis* has won a lasting name,
O tuneful Albius, as thy latest care,
Neither shall fade thy first love *Delia's* fame ;
Yet all your mystic rites were vain as air.

Ah, what avail'd your lying all alone,
And clashing idly Isis' sounding rods !
When fate removes the good—I fear to own
How I am tempted to deny the gods.

Live a pure life!—yet death remains thy doom.

Be pious!—ere from sacred shrines you rise
Death drags you heedless to the hollow tomb.

Confide in song!—lo, there Tibullus lies!

Scarce of so great a soul, thus lowly laid,

Enough remains to fill this little urn.

O holy bard, were not the flames afraid

That hallow'd corse thus ruthlessly to burn?

These might devour the gods' own halls, that shine

With gold, that dare a villainy so deep.

She turn'd, who holds the Erycinian shrine,

And there are some who say, she turn'd to weep.

Yet did the base soil of a stranger land

Not hold him nameless,—as the spirit fled,

His mother closed his eyes, with gentle hand,

And paid the last sad tribute to the dead.

Here, with thy wretched mother's woe to wait,

Thy sister came, with loose dishevell'd hair;

Nemesis kiss'd thee, and thy earlier mate,

They watch'd the pyre, when all had left it bare.

Departing Delia falter'd—"Thou wert true,

The Fates were cheerful, then, when I was thine"—

The other—"Say, what hast *thou* here to do,

Dying he clasp'd his failing hand in *mine*."

Ah! yet, if any part of us remains

But name and shadow, Albius is not dead.

And thou, Catullus, in Elysian plains,

With Calvus, see the ivy crown his head.

Thou, Gallus, prodigal of life and blood,
If false the charge of amity betray'd,
And aught remains, across the Stygian flood,
Shalt meet him yonder with thy happy shade.

Refined Tibullus, thou art join'd to those,
Living in calm communion with the blest.
In peaceful urn, thy quiet bones repose—
May earth lie lightly, where thy ashes rest.

Horace.

BOOK II.—ODE XVI.

"Otium Divos rogat in patenti."

THE weary sailor seeks repose,
When tempest-tost, on stormy seas ;
Scarcely the moon the clouds disclose,
The stars shine dimly, through the breeze.

Repose—the Thracian warrior bold,
Repose—the quiver'd Medes, demand ;
But not for purple, gems, nor gold,
Can rest be won, in any land.

For neither treasures, nor the art
Of consul's lictor can dispel,
The wretched tumults of the heart,
And cares that in the palace dwell.

Happy he lives, on humble fare,
Whose board supports his father's plate ;
Whose slumbers neither fear can scare,
Nor sordid avarice dissipate.

Why do we seek, in our short time,
So many things? why leave our strand,
To live beneath a warmer clime?
Who flies from self with native land?

Care climbs the brazen beaks of ships,
Nor does it pass the horseman o'er;
Far fleeter than the roebuck trips,
Or east-wind, blowing clouds before.

Give me the man who's joyous, while
'Tis fair, and, heedless of the rest,
Tempers misfortune with a smile;
No mortal is in all ways blest.

Swift death cut off Achilles keen,
Old age impaired Tithonus' hue;
Fortune may give to me, I ween,
What she has yet denied to you.

For thee race-horses loudly neigh,
You wear soft robes of richest dye;
Thine are a hundred flocks, that stray
On the Sicilian mountains high.

The truthful Fate to me has given
A little farm,—the power of song,—
Which the Greek Muse derives from heaven,—
And to despise the spiteful throng.

ODE XVI.—BOOK I.

"O matre pulchrâ filia pulchrior!"

OF a mother chaste and fair,
O thou daughter fairer still!
Let my angry lyrics share
Any doleful fate you will—
Plunge them in the stormy sea,
Or in flame—'tis one to me.

Neither Ida's goddess great,
Nor the dweller in the shrine,
Where Apollo reigns in state,
Nor the mighty god of wine,
Nor do brazen horns inspire
Terror like to baneful ire.

Anger which the fiery glance
Of no northern sword can scare,
Nor the ocean's wide expanse,
Nor the flames in fiercest glare,
Nor has Love himself the power,
Thundering in his angry hour.

Erst Prometheus, as they say,
When he, searching far and wide,
Added to primæval clay
Matter hewn from every side,
Set upon man's breast a part
Of the raging lion's heart.

Ancient direful passions wrought
Ills on ills on Atreus' race ;
This has oft to ruin brought
Mighty cities, and disgrace,—
While their bulwarks were laid low,
By the ploughshare of the foe.

Let your angry feelings rest,
I have felt how passion sways ;
'Twas the ardour of my breast,
In my pleasant boyish days,
Made me, warm with youthful fire—
Strike the light Iambic lyre.

Now I wish to change my lay,
Sing to you a softer strain,
And my satire cast away ;
If you'll be my friend again,
And incline your mind to me,
Since my song's unsung for thee.

EPODE XVI.

" Altera jam teritur bellis civilibus ætas."

ANOTHER age is wearing fast away
In civil war, and, 'mid the direful fray,
Rome is herself, by her own hand, laid low,

Who stood triumphant o'er the Marsic foe,—
 That city glorious, whose ascending name
 Not all the hosts of Porsena could tame,
 Nor Capua's rival chivalry withstand,
 Nor the bold leader of the servile band ;
 Before whose sway the Allobrogians fell,
 A faithless ally, as our annals tell,
 Whom fierce Germania's swarms have fail'd to quell, }
 Whom even Hannibal's detested rage
 Assail'd in vain, in this unhallow'd age
 Of blood accursèd, we to ruin give.
 Here once again, perchance, will forest monsters live,
 Or some barbarian victor, in his pride,
 With thundering hoof, shall o'er the city ride,
 And trample down the ashes of the dead,
 Yea, even dare, with haughty mien, to tread
 On great Quirinus' bones, long laid secure
 From winds and sun-rays—impious to endure !
 E'en now, the whole, or those of nobler mind,
 Are asking eager how they best may find
 A sure escape from the impending blow.
 Let my advice prevail : As long ago
 Phocæa's people fled, with stern decree
 That their old fields and homes and shrines should be,
 To roving boars and ravening wolves, a prey,
 Resolve we now afar to steer our way,
 Where'er our bark beyond the seas may sail,
 Or north wind drift us, or the southern gale.
 Does this seem fitting ? Have you aught to say ?
 Is there no better plan ? then why delay
 To man the vessel, under omens fair ?
 But now, an oath all solemn, let us swear,
 Till rocks shall swim the foamy surface o'er,
 Sprung from the lowest depths, we will return no
 more.

Then, may it please us to recross the wave,
With spreading canvas, when the Po shall lave
Calabrian summits,—when the ridges tall
Of Apennine shall into ocean fall,—
When a new love has bound—unheard-of sight—
Tigers to stags, the pigeon to the kite,—
When herds secure with tawny lions sleep,
And mountain goats, grown smooth, shall love the
briny deep.

Bound by such vows as these, and all that may
Debar sweet hope of a returning day,
Let all the state at once, with equal mind,
Or those above the throng their country leave behind ;
Let the faint-hearted and desponding still
Lounge on ill-omen'd couches, if they will ;
Come ye, my comrades of high souls and brave,
Great ocean waits us with encircling wave ;
Let us begone, unmanly tears dispel,
In order, boldly sweep along the Tuscan swell ;
Great ocean waits us, and the blessed isles ;
We seek the happy plains where plenty smiles,
Where, every year, unplough'd, the fertile plain
Yields a rich harvest of its golden grain ;
Where the ripe grape the unpruned vineshoot bears,
And the rich olive bloom unfailing wears.
There the dark fig on its own tree shall grow,
From the hard oak the dulcet honeys flow,
While ever gushes from the tall green hills
The murmuring footfall of a thousand rills ;
The flock, their udders swell'd with milk, bring home,
The goats unbidden to the threshold roam.
No bears at eve around the sheepfolds prowl,
Nor does the rich land teem with reptiles foul.
There can the herd by no contagion pine,

For, in no season, does a star malign
Consume the flock with heat, in scorching days;
Yet stranger sights shall charm us and amaze.
Nor there do east winds, full of storm and rain,
Sweep, with destructive force, athwart the plain;
Nor are the rich seeds wither'd in the sod,
For each extreme is temper'd by the God;
Hither no pine-ribbed Argo ever came,
Nor th' unchaste footsteps of the Colchian dame,—
Sidonian sailors never hail'd this land,
Nor e'en the great Ulysses' toil-worn band;
Jove for a holy race this sacred shore
Decreed and held apart, when, first of yore,
He stain'd with brass the primal age of gold;
But now o'er us hard iron sway would hold;
Wherefore, to you, ye favourites of heaven,
A happy flight with me, your prophet-bard, is given.

Virgil.

POLLIO.

SICILIAN muses, let us strive to sing
A nobler strain, with more aspiring wing;
The groves and tamarisks that love the ground
Delight not all, but if the woods we sound,
The woods are worthy of a consul's praise.
Now the last era, in the Sibyl's lays
Foretold, has dawn'd—the ages travell'd through,
In their majestic march, begin anew—
Virgo descends, and Saturn's ancient reign
Returns once more to bless the earth again.
Now a new race comes down from upper skies;
Regard Lucina, with benignant eyes;
The birth of him, 'neath whose auspicious sway,
The dismal iron age shall pass away,
And golden epochs rise o'er earth's domains.
Favour the growing boy—thine own Apollo reigns.
When shall this hero enter on his race?
Thy consulship, O Pollio, he will grace.
Then the great months shall onward roll amain,
Of former guilt the latest lingering stain,
Quite blotted out, with thee our gracious guide,

From fear shall free the nations far and wide.
He shall take on the life of gods and shine,
'Mong gods and heroes, equally divine ;
And rule the nations, lull'd to calm repose,
By the great deeds of them from whom he rose.
For thee, O boy, the earth shall pour around
The richest offerings, from the untill'd ground ;
The clustering ivy, with the spikenard green,
The bright acacia, with the Egyptian bean.
The goats their udders swell'd with milk bring home,
The herds secure from raging lions roam ;
Thy cradle shall shower forth the gentlest flowers,
The deadly snake shall die, nor, in the bowers,
Shall the deluding poisonous herb be grown,
While sweetest odours on the breeze are blown.
But when a youth, you read in ancient story,
How mighty heroes won their deathless glory ;
Hear of the glorious race your fathers ran,
And truly know what things befit a man.
Soon every field with corn shall yellow be,
And barrenness become fertility ;
On the rude briar the ripening grape shall grow,
And from hard oaks the dewy honeys flow.
Yet, even then, some traces shall remain
Of guilt, which makes us cross the ocean plain,
Which bids us wall our stately cities round,
And, with hard ploughshare, cleave the stubborn
ground.
Tiphys again shall rise, and o'er the sea
Another Argo bear new chivalry.
Then deadly wars revived afresh shall spring,
And great Achilles' arms round Ilion ring.
But when thy fuller manhood shall arrive,
On the rough main no mariner need strive,

Nor launch the pine to carry distant wares,
When every climate every product bears.
The land shall feel no harrow, nor the stroke
Of pruning-hook the vine ; from irksome yoke
The rustic hastes his oxen to unloose ;
The wool shall cease to shine in borrow'd hues,
The ram himself on verdant grass shall lie,
In glowing purple, or with saffron dye
Shall deck his fleece, and o'er the spangled mead
Rich red shall clothe the lambkins as they feed.
" Run on such ages ever gloriously "—
Thus, in accord with destiny's decree,
The fates are chaunting as their spindles move.
Scion of gods—increase of sovereign Jove—
Make haste to enter on thy high command,
Dear to immortals—mark, the time at hand,
The great world nodding with its rounded weight.
For thee the lands and ocean's wide estate
Expectant look ; and heaven's capacious dome.
See all exulting in the age to come !
O may kind fate e'en yet assign to me
Life long enough to sing deeds done by thee ;
And if for this the gods my song inspire,
I'll vie with Orpheus, or with Linus' lyre,
Though the fair Muse, his mother, aid the one,
And though the other be the great Apollo's son ;
Striving with Pan, were I to raise thy fame,
Even from Pan the laurel I might claim,
His own Arcadians judging all the while.
Begin, young boy, to know thy mother's smile,
This may her weary toil for thee requite.
Begin !—for he on whom no smiles alight,
For him no table shall with gods be spread,
Nor favouring goddess lead to her celestial bed.

Juvenal.

SATIRE X. 147-167.

HANNIBAL.

BEHOLD this ounce of dust! then think how low,
How shrunk the mightiest of conquerors now;
A little dust and ashes! this is all
That's left of the once dreaded Hannibal.
Here is the man whom Afric's wide domain
With all her vast extent could ne'er contain—
Stretching from where, round Mauritania, roars
The inland ocean, to the steaming shores
Of ancient Nilus, and then southward spread
To Æthiop, where earth-shaking monsters tread.
First to his sway subjected, Spain he sees;
Soon with a bound he leaps the Pyrenees;
The Alps oppose their snow—resistance vain!
He cleaves their rocks, and rends the hill in twain—
The mountains baffled—Italy is won:
Still his undeviating course is *On*.—
“To Rome!” he cries, “our task is but begun;
Until we storm her gates there's nothing done.

And I, amid my Carthaginian band,
Our flag unfurl'd, within the city stand"—
Rare sight in sooth! and for the painter meet;
The one-eyed captain borne along our street,
High on an elephant—majestic theme!
But hear the end of this aspiring dream;
Alas for glory! *he*, too, is o'erthrown,
And hurries into exile drear alone—
He with whose fame all regions used to ring,
Dependent now on a Bithynian king;
Beside his porch an humble seat must take
Until it please the despot to awake.
Nor swords, nor stones, nor deadly weapons hurl'd,
Need quench that soul which once perturb'd the world;
Within the circlet of a ring there lay
Vengeance enough for Cannæ's lurid day—
Vengeance enough for all that dismal waste
Of life and blood. Go, vaunting madman, haste!
Career o'er savage Alps, that thou mayst rise,
To form the subject of an exercise.

Lucretius.

I. 716-734.

EMPEDOCLES.

FIRST among those the Agrigentine stands,
Empedocles, whom cloud-capt Sicily
Rear'd in the circuit of her winding shores.
Three-sided—there, round deep re-entering bays,
Flows the Ionian, and her azure waves
Dash high on sounding beach the briny spray.
This spacious isle, in rapid coursing tide,
Through narrow fiith, the surging sea divides,
From the opposing coast of Italy.
Here the abyss of dire Charybdis foams—
Here Ætna's mutter'd thunders threaten oft
Once more to gather all their pent-up rage,
Again to belch, in fellest fury, fire
From out the mountain, and again to hurl
Far-flashing bolts of flame athwart the sky.
This region vast, so strange in many ways,
Wondrous to all mankind, and famed afar,

Rich in a thousand blessings, guarded well
By the stern bulwark of her hero men,
O'er all her long extent holds nought esteem'd
So glorious as her immortal sage ;
Nought so revered, so wondrous, and adored.
Such strains majestic, from his heavenly soul,
Peal through his lips, and clear to us unfold
His mystic science, that we scarce believe
One so exalted born of mortal mould.

Catullus.

SIRMIO.

SWEET Sirmio, gem of all the isles
And sunny capes that Neptune laves,
Where the long lake around them smiles,
Or roll the boundless ocean waves.

From Pontus and Bithynian plain,
I haste rejoicing unto thee,
And scarce believe I am again,
Secure, in thy tranquillity.

How welcome is thy sunny strand!
The hour is blessèd—what more fair,
Than when we rest in native land,
And bid adieu to busy care.

When, worn with toil, the weary mind
Lays down its load, and we return
To the loved couch we left behind—
The hearths at home, that warmly burn.

This hope alone may well beguile
Long labours over land and sea ;
All hail, sweet Sirmio ! gently smile,
And share your master's buoyant glee.

Rejoice, ye waters and ye waves !
Thou Lydian lake, serenely shine !
On every shore, thy rippling laves,
Shed all the laughter that is thine !

ATYS.

HURRIED o'er the seas profound,
Impetuous Atys' fiery feet
Sought the dark grove, whose shades surround
The Phrygian goddess' dread retreat ;
Where struck by madness, all his mind astray,
Infuriate grown,
He seized a flinty stone,
And dash'd the symbols of his sex away.

Soon as the victim felt its limbs bereft
Of manhood, while its wound yet left,
On the warm soil, a sweltering stain,
Smit with an ecstasy divine,
It seized the drum in snowy hands amain,

The trump and timbrel sacred to thy shrine—
Great mother thine!
On the rough hide the tender fingers flung,
And thus, in outcry tremulous, to its wild companions
sung.

“Haste, haste ye to the grove,
Toward the deep shades come with me,
Ye wandering flocks of Cybele,
Ye that, like lorn exiles, rove,
Seeking distant stranger lands :
Faithful still to my commands,
Ye have cross'd the briny ocean,—
Braved the tempest's wild commotion,—
And following me, with hate inflamed
Of Aphrodite—all untamed,
Your manhood's might resign'd ;
Be roused to frenzy unconfined—
Awake, awake, the fiery mind !

“Rise at once, no more delay,
Through the Phrygian groves to roam,
Seek the mighty mother's home ;
Follow me—away, away !
Where the cymbals clash around,
While the echoing drums rebound,
Where the Phrygian minstrel singing,
Pipes the reed with hollow sound,
Where the Mænades are flinging
High their heads, with ivy crown'd,
Where the solemn rites are held,
And the shrilling chorus yell'd,
Where the goddess revellers play,
Thither let us dance to-day—
Haste ye, haste—away ! away !”

Thus Atys, eunuch maiden, sung,
And swift there rose, from all the listening rout,
From quivering tongues, the wild ecstatic shout ;
 The hollow cymbals rung,
The drums boom'd back, as with an onward leap,
The rapid chorus ran to Ida's verdant steep.

Infuriate, panting, wandering wide,
Through the dark forests, madden'd, rush along,
Where Atys leads the all-impetuous throng ;
 It beats the drum—the restless guide,
Like untamed heifer, that still spurns the load ;
In whirling stream behind the Corybantes flow'd.

Soon as they reach the grove, where wends
Great Cybele, all weary,—wanting food,—
Wayworn, they sink in slumber through the wood ;
 When sluggish, soothing, sleep descends,
And seals their languid eyes, by toil oppress'd,
The furies of their souls depart in gentle rest.

But when the sun's broad face of light
Arose and shone, with golden, gleaming eyes,
O'er savage seas, hard earth, transparent skies,
 And with swift steeds had put to flight
 The shades of night,
From startled Atys Sleep his pennons shook,
Him trembling to her breast divine Pasithea took.

After repose—its raving o'er,
When Atys view'd its deed in tranquil mind,
Saw where it was, and what it had resign'd,
 Raging, it sought again the shore—
O'er the waste wave with tearful eyelids gazed,
And, toward its native land, a voice of mourning raised.

O my country, that hast reared me! O my country,
mother dear!
Land that I have left behind me, in my wretched wander-
ing drear,
Like a slave that flees affrighted, from his angry master's
frown,
I have borne my footstep onward to the woods that Ida
crown,
Thus to lurk beside the snowdrift—with the savage herds
to stray,
Visit all their chill recesses, roam myself, as wild as they!
Where shall I believe thee shining, O my country! o'er
the sea;
With my eyeballs eager longing to direct their glance on
thee,
While my soul's respite from madness lasts, and they are
frenzy-free.
Aye! and is my doom for ever, here afar from sight of
home,
In those sullen forests, darkly, from my native land to
roam—
From my land, and goods, and kindred—from my parents,
here to dwell,
Ne'er to see the games and races—manly sports I loved so
well?
Woe is me! bewail my spirit o'er and o'er, with anguish
torn!
Say what form of comely stature is there that I have not
worn;
I was man and gallant stripling, unshorn youth and play-
ful boy;
I, the flower of the gymnasium, the palæstra's grace and
joy!
Mine the thronging gates, the threshold, warm with friends,
in sunny hours;

Mine the mansion early wreathèd with fresh coronets of
flowers,
When I left the nightly chamber, rising with the sun at
morn,
Shall I, a menial of the gods, a goddess slave, be held in
scorn!
I a Mænad! Part of Atys! I a man no longer now!
I to dwell in regions mantled by green Ida's icy snow!
I to live a life regardless 'neath the Phrygian mountain
brow,
With the stag that haunts the forest, and the boar that
roams the glade!
Now, ah now! I wail and wonder at the wreck that I have
made!

Soon as those wavering accents broke
From roseate lips, and bore unwonted news,
Cybele heard, as bending to unloose
Her savage lions from the yoke,
The left attendant, known to flocks a pest,
With fury she inspired, and urging, thus address'd—

“Arouse thee, monster, and away!
Fierce servant, hearken to my stern decree—
Smite with thy raging, make yon rebel flee,
O'erwhelm'd with dire dismay;
Back to those thickets must the wretch return,
Who dares untimely now my high command to spurn.

“Come, swing thy wrathful tail again,
Lash thee to madness, wilder than before,
Till all around re-echo with thy roar—
Fierce shake the tawny mane,
That bristles rough on thy huge neck,” thus cried
The threatening Cybele—her hand the leash untied.

The lion wild enkindled more,
And spurr'd the headlong fury of his mind—
He foam'd, and rent the trees with onset blind ;
 But when he reach'd the gleaming shore,
And on the far edge of the marbled deep
Saw the soft Atys stand, he ran with raging leap.

It maddening sought the wild-woods' screen,
And there life-long remain'd a slave of thine,
Dread power, great goddess Cybele, divine.
 Mistress, Dindyminian queen,
Far from my home, thy awful wrath delay,
Drive *others* wildly mad, let *others* own thy sway !

Sonnets. &c.

To Walter Savage Landor.

THERE'S nothing rarer, fairer to behold,
Than a rich soul expanding, as it swells
With each new truth—thy page supremely tells
The joys and sorrows of Athenians old;
How dawn athwart the long Piræus roll'd,
When Pericles and his Ionian queen,
Divine Aspasia, ruled, with godlike mien.
Yet all the glories thou hast sung and told,
But fan the ardour of a breast that glows
For great and good,—in every age and clime:
Thou chauntest still, ere thy serene repose,
The mightiest spirit of our modern time.
God bless thee, English oak, we long to see
More golden fruit from such a hale old tree.

"I, Demens, et sævas curre per Alpes."

ROMAN, we love thy praise, not sham disdain
Of that best warrior of the ancient world.
When, through thy haughty gates, his lance was
hurl'd,
Or thy last legion sank on Cannæ's plain,
He had not cloven the ice-bound Alps in vain.
Where was the scorn, when first his archers keen
Sprang from the mists that circle Thrasymene?
E'en Julius' classic grandeur seems to wane,
And Macedonia's meteor, as that will,
Calmly heroic, through the long stern years,
In evil fate unconquerable still,
And watchful exile, more sublime appears
Than when each stone, on Rome's imperial wall,
Shook at the dreaded name of Hannibal.

Luther.

THERE is an ugly turmoil among creeds,
Warring and jarring with unhappy sound,
Till living faith within our heart is drown'd.
Men have so stifled the eternal seeds
Of pure religion, with their rankest weeds,
The kernel truth is so enwrapp'd and wound,
In painful sifting far too finely ground,
It oft escapes us, and our daily deeds
Lose their divine commission—thus the strife
Of each keeps thwarting the one end of all,
Or what should be—our unbefriended life
Needs clearer guidance. Hark, the ages call—
more - “Once ~~again~~ the ancient oracles are dumb—
Luther, again we need thee.” He will come !

Bust of Napoleon.

WHERE art thou, mighty head?—in stormy days,
By ceaseless mockery of babblers vex'd,
Lauding and scolding, is the age perplex'd ;
Our reverence, lost in unheroic maze,
Wreathes thy colossal brows, with fresher bays.
They named thee tyrant, and gigantic crimes.
Marr'd thy gigantic glory ; yet, in times
Empty of greatness, weak with vain delays,
When aimless nations, full of aimless men,
Drift onward starless, we are fain to see
A semblance of thy equal soul again,
Thy iron hand to quell this foolery.
Where art thou, mighty head?—with clouded ken,
The age is groping for a man like thee.

Kossuth.

I.

EMPTY of greatness! Kossuth, only thou,
With kindred spirits, may redeem the stain—
It cannot be *thy* efforts fall in vain.
We feel 'tis well—'tis something, even now,
That empire sits, on one majestic brow ;
Here is a clearer beacon for the free,
Than He, whose very name was victory :
Before this monarch let the phantoms bow.
He is our earth-king, let us haste to do
His bidding—where the pure stars shine,
Let our faith follow—heroes guide us through
The sunken shoals—they speak, in words divine.
“ 'Twas said of yore, but I declare to you
A nobler truth than those old creeds of thine.”

Rossuth.

II.

THEY gave thee welcome! Did it not surprise
Thy quiet soul, in that tumultuous hour,
To meet such clamour?—Clouds begin to lour :
“ They never knew the man ! ”—The fickle flies,
Hating the truth and loving pleasant lies,
Disown, deny thee—yet thou seem’st too great
For me to sing—since unrelenting fate
Finds thy faith firm, and golden words more wise.
What matters it their undiscerning gaze?
The herds that crouch beneath the heel of power,
Thou heedest not their murmur or their praise.
Better low music, or a dewy flower,
That wakes the memory of serener days,
In wastes the thought of some far happy bower.

A Lyric.

HARK ! the forest shakes amain,
Europe's plains are swept again—
Breathes the old heroic strain,
Through the waving boughs.

Arching trees no more may shade
Stifling swamps,—from deepest glade,
Organ-toned and undecay'd,
Martial music flows.

Nations crumbled, sloth-oppress'd,
Stagnant in contented rest ;
War has raised her stirring crest—
Hark ! the clarion blows.

Ruddy Alma's cannon song,
That shall echo loud and long,
Storm of terror to the wrong,
Ends not where it rose.

Forge the northern vulture's chain!—
Not for this, alone, the rain
Rattled o'er the red-hot plain,
In the fiery close.

Mighty powers of nature sleep,—
But the thunders of yon steep
Bid divine ideas leap,
From a long repose.

Bind the winds and tame the sea!
But when Liberty, let free,
Shakes the tower of tyranny,
Who the issue knows?

They are up, and hand to hand!
Tremble knaves in short command!
Slaves, rejoice! God rules the land—
Freedom's star yet glows.

Back, ye selfish, sordid crew!
Turn your spindles,—not for you
Does the world rebound anew,
With the clash of foes.

Hush! there swell, across the waves,
Underneath exulting staves,
Muffled marches from the graves,
Where our warriors bled.

Glory to the brave who fell,
Faces starward, fighting well!
Sternly rung the despot's knell,
From their gory bed.

In your martial bloom ye lie,
Tombs beneath a stranger sky ;
So the dauntless dare to die,
 Scorning coward dread.

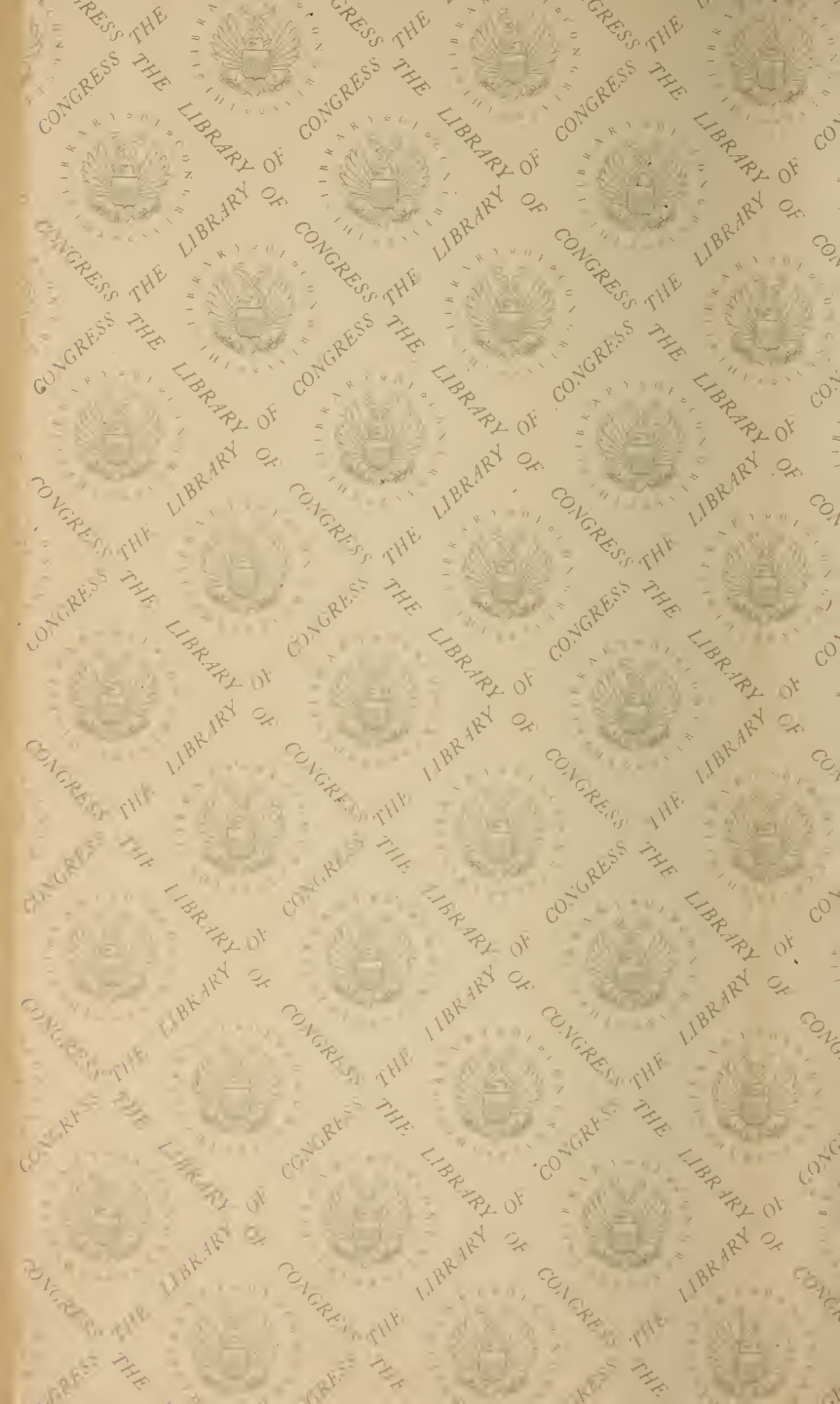
Life yields not to swords and spears !
Conquering self, and quelling fears,
Heroes rise to nobler spheres,
 When their breath has fled.

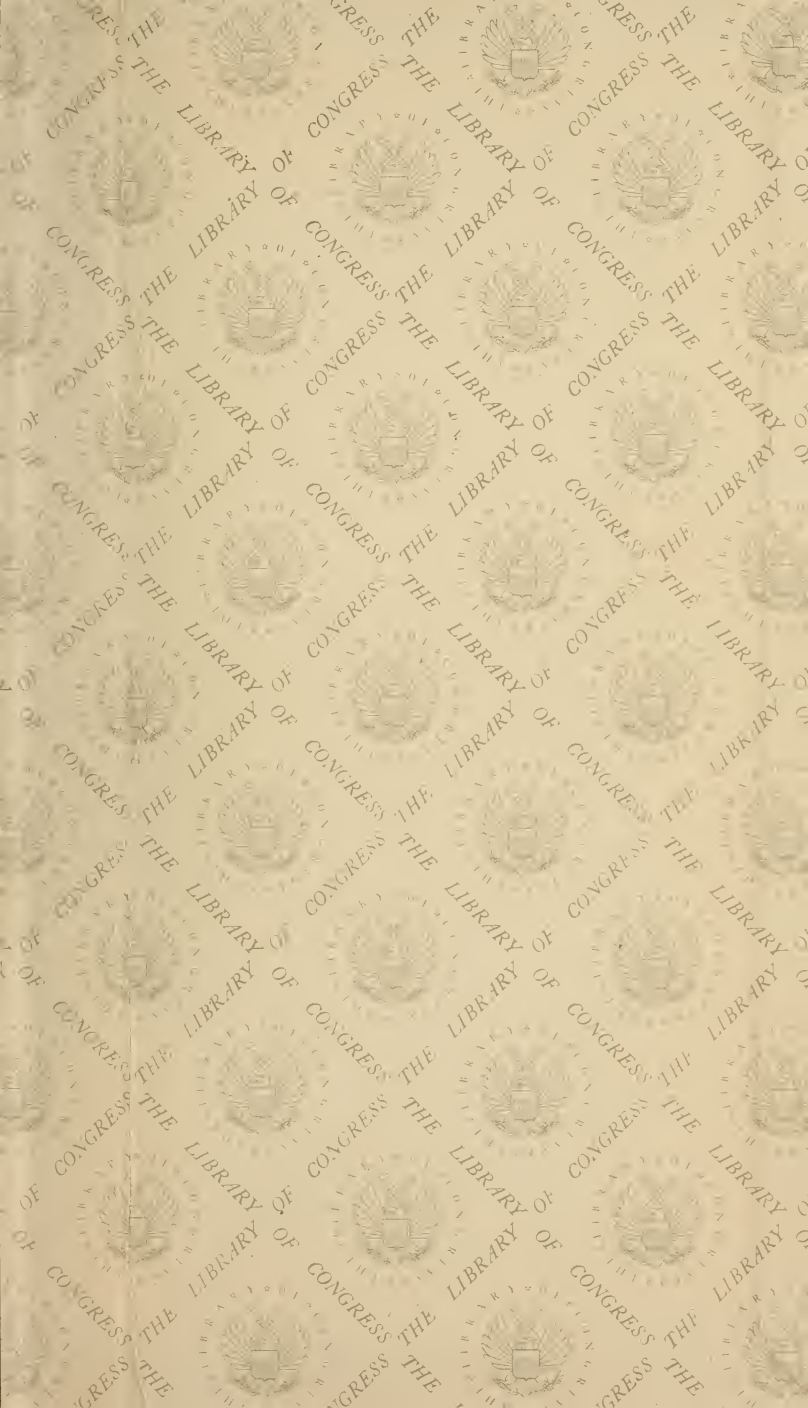
Cease to murmur dirges vain ;
Rather, in triumphal strain,
Chaunt the requiem of the slain—
 Glory to the dead !

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